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WINTER MAINTENANCE

Cost of services too high: Report

Ottawa's high winter-maintenance standards could be costing unnecessary money, auditor general Ken Hughes said Thursday.

In his annual report, Hughes found the city's winter-maintenance standards are among the highest in the province and far above legislated minimums.

But city staff need to analyze how much extra money that's costing taxpayers, said Hughes.

"It would allow council to make a decision to either leave the standard where it is ... or reduce it to another level," he said.

Ottawa's residential roads, for example, are dealt with 10 hours after a snowfall, but the provincial standard is 16 to 20 hours, public-works manager Kevin Wylie said.

Such a costing report is already underway. Auditing firm KPMG will table a detailed review of winter operations next spring and is expected to recommend new standards somewhere between the minimum requirement and current service levels.

Hughes also recommended randomly weighing salt-delivery trucks to ensure the city's getting what it paid for.

The report also stated public works should review lower-priority work. Public works has built \$2.5 million worth of savings into its 2016 operations, including closer monitoring of salt and sand applications as well as better staffing to reduce overtime and on-call costs.

EMMA JACKSON/METRO

City finances scrutinized

OTTAWA AUDIT REPORT

Better analysis needed for big decisions, says Ken Hughes



The city needs to think like an accountant to run a tighter ship, auditor general Ken Hughes said Thursday.

That's when the auditor tabled his annual report, which scrutinized several city departments and services, including the 311 call centre, winter operations, information-technology risk management, species-at-risk protection and accounts payable.

While dozens of specific recommendations were made and accepted by city staff, Hughes said a common theme was the lack of financial analysis when making everyday decisions.

"Before you make a decision, you ensure there is a valid reason for why you are taking a particular course of action," Hughes said.

That's missing in a lot of city functions. For example, the city's winter-maintenance standards are higher than the provincial standard, but there's no breakdown of the extra cost involved or what taxpayers can expect to get for that money.

There's also no analysis of what mix of 311 staff — full time, part time or casual — would de-



Auditor general Ken Hughes said city hall needs to use its resources more efficiently. In his report, Hughes said the city should also take IT risks more seriously. EMMA JACKSON/METRO

“Ensure there is a valid reason for why you are taking a particular action.”
Ken Hughes

liver the best service and best deal for the city.

If the city is serious about being efficient, Hughes added, it also needs to be better at embracing its own technology.

He said there are automated processes available right now that could improve how staff

work. For example, 311 has a staffing management tool it doesn't use, and accounts payable doesn't take advantage of a tool that catches duplicate bills.

Hughes found, as well, that accounts payable wasted \$603,000 because invoices were paid late or didn't take advantage of early-bird discounts — something a system upgrade could fix.

One of the most important issues for Hughes was the lack of an information-technology risk management framework.

He said a corporation like Ottawa — with a budget of \$3 billion and 17,000 employees — needs to take IT risks seriously.

"You have to have a process in place to identify those risks and bring the riskiest risks to the top," he said.

He said department managers are asked to identify risks for new projects, but if they don't have a background in IT issues, they might not list potential IT risks.

Part of the problem, he added, was that Ottawa lacked a full-time chief information officer for several years.

A full-time CIO, Charles Duffett, came on earlier this year, which Hughes said will "eliminate a lot of the risks" he identified.

+ HIGHLIGHTS

The auditor general found the following:

- The city didn't need to spend \$1.2 million repaving the Mackenzie King Bridge in 2010; instead, it could have spent \$390,000 over 12 years to maintain the troublesome asphalt.

- Ottawa lacks an information-technology risk management strategy, which leaves the city — and its residents — vulnerable to privacy breaches.

- The city's 311 centre is slow to answer calls compared to other cities and doesn't always provide up-to-date information. The service's audit garnered 34 recommendations for improvement.

- The city could save \$1 million a year if it changes how it hires consultants in infrastructure services, including asking for a 10 per cent discount when contracts are worth more than \$150,000.

- Ottawa's winter-maintenance operation standards are much higher than the provincial minimums, which could be costing taxpayers. The department could also save money if it contracts out its plowing operations and cuts down on low-priority tasks like picking up litter. EMMA JACKSON/METRO

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The City of Ottawa's auditor tabled his annual report on Thursday. METRO FILE

City's 311 callers get left hanging

OTTAWA AUDIT REPORT

Call centre's information often late and wrong: Report



**Emma
Jackson**
Metro | Ottawa

The city's 311 call centre is letting residents down, says auditor general Ken Hughes.

His audit, tabled Thursday, made 34 recommendations to improve the service, which provides information and allows people to report problems such as potholes, broken traffic lights and bylaw violations.

According to the audit, Ottawa's 311 keeps callers on hold much longer than other Canadian cities: local agents are expected to answer 80 per cent of

calls within two minutes, but cities including Vancouver and Calgary answer the same number in only 30 seconds.

The 20 per cent left hanging wait an average of eight minutes, Hughes said, although 91 per cent of all calls are answered under five.

A big problem, Hughes found, was how hang-ups are reported. Right now, the nine per cent of calls abandoned before two minutes are considered answered, even though staff didn't speak to the client. After two minutes, the abandoned call counts as unanswered.

Hughes recommended a full analysis to figure out when and why calls are abandoned and if that correlates to wait times.

Hughes also asked staff to improve city information available to agents, because right now it's not at all guaranteed to be correct. Hughes said 60 per cent of articles sampled from the

centre's "knowledge database" were inaccurate, out of date or obsolete.

Another big problem exists in Service Ottawa's email service. When someone emails 311@ottawa.ca, it can take five days or more to process a service request, compared to 2.5 minutes on the phone, said Service Ottawa director Donna Gray.

She said emails aren't scripted like phone conversations or online forms, so they may be missing important information or span several issues. Staff then have to call the client back and spend extra time sorting through the complexities of the request.

Hughes recommended the department include email service levels in its semi-annual report to council.

He also recommended revisiting the possibility of outsourcing the 311 service altogether.

50K

Number of calls
fielded by the
centre in 2014

Handling of LRT, Lansdowne contract on next year's list

The city's auditor general says he will examine how the government managed its Lansdowne contract with Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG) next year, three days after the city announced it won't make a profit on the flagship park.

Earlier this week, an internal report found higher-than-expected construction and renovation costs corroded any profit the city might have seen in 2015, and

its operating partner OSEG posted a \$10.9-million loss as well.

It wasn't the only timely item on the agenda. Auditor general Ken Hughes will also review the city's LRT planning and management operations as well as the LRT regulatory framework next year.

Hughes said auditing light-rail processes now — before Stage 2 begins — is a better use of his time instead of waiting until it's

over and telling staff where they went wrong.

"If we can provide any third-party insight into implementing the plan, we can provide better value," said Hughes.

Several councillors tried to add to his 2016 work plan, with little success. Emergency-preparedness services, IT remote-access controls and ambulance services are also on the agenda next year.

EMMA JACKSON/METRO

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Club suspended after tip

ATHLETICS

U of O involved in internal review of 'misconduct'



Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

The Student Federation of the University of Ottawa has confirmed that the university is conducting an internal investigation into an anonymous tip about an alleged sexual assault by a varsity athlete.

On Tuesday, the University of Ottawa released a cryptic statement to media announcing the school was launching an internal review of "misconduct" involving a student-run club.

The statement emphasized that the club was not run through Sports Services, but an independent student-run athletic group.

Neither the university nor the student association would confirm which club has been

suspended, but only a handful of athletic clubs are listed on the SFUO website.

The school's release said the misconduct happened in February but senior administrators and the student association leaders were not informed until an anonymous report was received Nov. 11.

The fact that sexual assault was not mentioned in the official statement "disappointed" the student association, prompting their follow-up statement released Wednesday evening.

"To our knowledge, this is a club mostly made up of Gee-Gee varsity athletes.

"Thus, contrary to the statement put out by the university, the university's Sports Services is implicated in this through an alleged aggressor in the anonymous email being a varsity athlete," read the online statement.

"Moreover, the SFUO is disappointed to see that the University of Ottawa has again failed to name the problem, using terms like 'misconduct', thus delegitimizing the experiences of survivors of sexual

"The university's Sports Services is implicated in this, through an alleged aggressor in the anonymous email being a varsity athlete."

Student association statement

assault," it continued.

The unidentified club has been suspended until further notice, according to the release.

The school said police were contacted about the alleged incident in February but did not lay charges.

They have hired an independent investigator to help the university determine "whether further action is necessary."

Both university spokesperson Neomie Duval and the SFUO said they would not provide further details until the investigation is complete.



A building at the University of Ottawa. **HALEY RITCHIE/METRO**

COURT

Accused in Jean killing makes first appearance

A 40-year-old woman charged with first-degree murder made her first appearance in court Thursday following her arrest in the city's seventh homicide of the year.

Ottawa police arrested Candy Locey Wednesday along with two other men, one of whom is her 23-year-old son, in the shooting death of Dady Junior Jean.

Jean, 41, was shot dead in the driveway of his home on Lacasse Avenue in Vanier on Nov. 14.

Locey's son, Johnnie-Dean Locey-Derochie, was arrested Wednesday, along with Dominique Paul Chretien, 40.

All three of the accused were remanded into custody until their next court appearance on Dec. 3.

They were instructed not to communicate with each other, or a long list of other potential witnesses, while in custody.

Court records show Locey and Chretien lived in the neighbourhood where the killing took place.

JOE LOFARO/METRO

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Ottawa police shuffle resources to deal with spike in shootings



Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

Ottawa police have been shifting internal resources over the past couple of weeks to cope with the recent increase in gun violence that is playing out on the city's streets.

The police service's Guns and Gangs Unit has been overloaded with shooting after shooting, including a fatal one that claimed the life of a 41-year-old man.

Dady Junior Jean was shot dead on his Lacasse Avenue driveway on the night of Nov. 14. The Major Crime Unit laid first-degree murder charges against three people in that case on Wednesday.

Since Nov. 9, there have been 10 more shootings, bringing the total number of incidents in Ottawa to 42 so far in 2015.

The number is on track to surpassing 2014's record number of 49 shootings in Ottawa.

There are eight full-time de-

tectives and two sergeants in the Guns and Gangs Unit.

Insp. Chris Renwick, who oversees the unit, said officers from other units, including the drug unit and the district investigators, are being reassigned on a case-by-case basis to ease the pressure on investigators.

"That's my job, to manage all of that. Sometimes we'll have other detectives working in there on specific tasks and when they're done they'll return," said Renwick. "And sometimes just with the volume, our investigators are getting fatigued and we need to put more investigators to spell off some of the pressure."

The recent spike in shootings has been "very resource-intensive" and requires more investigative hours and techniques, he added.

As the shootings become more prevalent, Renwick said he doesn't believe there are more guns on the street; young criminals are merely using firearms

42

Number of shooting incidents in Ottawa this year, seven short of the record set in 2014.

instead of their fists to settle disputes.

"Young men are more prone to arm themselves and use that firearm when they come in that dispute — be it over a drug transaction gone wrong or something as minor as a belief of sign of disrespect or a slight from somebody else," he said.

Mayor Jim Watson has requested a meeting with police chief Charles Bordeleau and police board chairman Coun. Eli El-Chantiry next week to discuss the shootings.

"Obviously, it's a concern to me," he told reporters on Wednesday. "Thank goodness there have not been 40 people shot. There have been over 40 shootings, but if you have a gunshot going through your wall and it's landing on a mirror or a couch, that's obviously a traumatic experience for that family and that neighbourhood."

WITH FILES FROM EMMA JACKSON



"Our investigators are getting fatigued and we need to put more investigators to spell off some of the pressure."

Insp. Chris Renwick

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BYWARD MARKET

Mellos diner seeking new location before lease expires



Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

Faced with a year's-end takeover by its next-door neighbour, Mellos Restaurant is considering moving to another location to keep its staff and clientele happy.

Mellos' landlord, Domicile Commercial Management, said last month when neighbouring Ace Mercado moved in to the space on Dalhousie Street, it was given the option to lease adjacent properties.

After the diner's lease expires on Dec. 31, the landlord-tenant agreement will allow for the Mexican restaurant to take over Mellos, which has been a Byward Market fixture since 1942.

Longtime customers denounced the agreement between Ace Mercado and Domicile, and started an online campaign called #savemellos on social media.

In response to the public outcry, Mellos operating manager Nina Vaccaro said Thursday they are launching a fundraiser next Monday at the diner to help cover costs of the potential move. To where, Vaccaro doesn't know yet.



Mellos Restaurant has been operating in the Byward Market since 1942. JOE LOFARO/METRO

"We would definitely stay in the Byward Market.... We're not there yet," she said.

The new location and the fundraising goal will be released in the coming days.

The diner originally said it would seek a court injunction to prevent the takeover, but Vaccaro said she is backing away from that on advice from her lawyers.

"Without the Kickstarter, if we don't reach our goal we don't know if we will be able to move," she added.

Vaccaro said it is her hope to also move the neon sign if her business does relocate.

The fundraiser will run from 6:30 to 11:30 p.m. on Monday.

"This party is for them; it's for Mellos, it's for the community. Hopefully people — along with having a great time — will donate and show their support toward Mellos," said Vaccaro.

That same day, she expects to launch an online Kickstarter campaign to collect donations in the weeks ahead.

Ace Mercado said in a written statement last month the motive behind the takeover was to maintain local ownership of the diner and prevent it from becoming vacant.

It also said it would maintain the diner's character and offer Mellos staff to stay on after the lease expires.

Canada Goose coat a 'living sculpture'

HUB OTTAWA

Ottawa artist joins forces with apparel company



Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

At a celebration of a changing Ottawa, local artist Eric Chan's blend of art, fashion and entrepreneurship stood out as something out of the ordinary for the capital city.

Chan was showing off his winter coat Thursday morning: A limited-edition Canada Goose jacket designed by him and lined with his original art.

The inside features a dazzling array of colourful symbols: Nine Canadian geese, the Governor General's lion, trilliums, the rising sun, maple leaves and quirky cartoon flowers with faces.

The "living sculpture" reflects Chan's Canadian background, East Asian heritage and artistic style.

"There's stories in here," he said. "But when you look at it, it's the DNA of who I am. And it's a beautiful piece of artwork."

Even the company's quintessential shoulder patch is customized with red, blue and green, the colours that make up the digital art with which Chan is making his mark.

Chan presented at a Hub Ottawa event Thursday morning, part of the co-working space's annual Impact/Failure report.

His collaboration with the Canada-based company falls squarely in the "impact" category. The organization is looking to foster more of that energy as Ottawa prepares for its 150th anniversary.



Digital artisan Eric Chan, a.k.a. eepmon, 35, displays his limited-edition collaboration with Canada Goose. Only 150 of the jackets were made and sold around the world.

HALEY RITCHIE/METRO

anniversary.

Chan, who goes by the artist moniker eepmon, was born and raised in Ottawa and went to both Algonquin College and Carleton University.

He's an international artist, often travelling to Beijing, Hong Kong and Toronto. He lived in New York for a number of years but eventually returned to Ottawa.

That, too, is sometimes unusual in a city that loses creative

talent to bigger metropolises like Montreal and Toronto.

"The thing is that when you travel a lot and see places, you realize there's some really positive things in Ottawa," explained Chan.

"I have a love for our city and I think that if I have an opportunity directly or indirectly to help build the creative aspect of Ottawa, then why not? I'm still travelling, I'm still mobile, but I have an anchor in this city."

UBER

Report urges relaxing of taxi rules amid competition

The federal competition bureau wants to let taxi companies be more like Uber.

In a report released Thursday, competition commissioner John Pecman said local and provincial governments should remove restrictions on the number of taxi licences they grant to drivers, allow people anywhere to hail rides from the curb and offer surge pricing, which Uber now uses to charge more at times when there is greater demand.

Canadians spent almost \$1.2

billion on taxis last year. A report prepared by Ottawa's local authorities in October found Uber prices average around 36 per cent less than a comparable cab fare.

The bureau says that has created an uneven playing field, and that cities and provinces should balance the scales by easing rules on taxis rather than looking to increase regulations.

Last month, Toronto Mayor John Tory said that while Uber is operating outside legislation, it would be impractical to de-

vote the police and bylaw attention necessary to shut it down entirely.

Still, Toronto has joined other cities including Ottawa in issuing fines against Uber drivers. Montreal has done the same and in some cases gone further, seizing vehicles.

In Calgary, Uber has suspended its service after a judge approved a temporary injunction against it last week.

The report's recommendations aren't binding. THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Grey Cup 2015 is East vs. West



Ottawa Redblacks' William Powell celebrates his touchdown against the Winnipeg Blue Bombers in Winnipeg on Oct. 24. JOHN WOODS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Why Ottawa will win



Michael Woods
Metro | Ottawa

Sorry, Edmonton. With the Oilers floundering again and a cold winter fast approaching, we know a Grey Cup would really help raise your spirits.

But it's not going to happen this year, at least not if the Ottawa Redblacks — the CFL's best rags-to-riches story — have their say.

There has been much talk leading up to Sunday's game about the Eskimos, particularly their vaunted defence and quarterback Mike Reilly's calm dismantling of the Calgary Stampeders last weekend.

But the Redblacks are the CFL's most potent offence. Their receiving corps of Chris Williams, Greg Ellingson, Ernest Jackson, Brad Sinopoli and Mo Price is the league's

deepest. All but Price were 1,000-yard receivers this season.

It's tough to cover all those guys at once, especially when 40-year-old standout quarterback Henry Burris is in charge. He threw for more yards this year than anyone has since 2004.

Reilly is great; he has led his team to nine straight wins since coming back from an injury. But experience is a factor in big games, and Reilly has never played in a Grey Cup game. Burris has been here before, leading the Stampeders to the 2008 Grey Cup championship.

Edmonton's defence is admittedly good, but Ottawa's isn't too shabby, either. The Redblacks led the league in sacks and interceptions and were the league's best defence against the run. They allowed the second-fewest yards per game in the league

(Edmonton allowed the fewest).

Edmonton is the one CFL team the Redblacks have never beaten. These two teams played each other back-to-back in July, with the Eskimos torching Ottawa 46-17 in Edmonton and the Redblacks playing to a much closer 23-12 loss at home.

But this game is on neutral ground, and the Redblacks are an entirely different team. They have since hit their stride and won a division title. The Redblacks are underdogs, but that suits them just fine. You don't get go from a 2-16 first season to a division championship by worrying about the odds.

For Ottawa this weekend, the third time will be the charm.

Unfortunately for them, it's midnight and it's time to go home, completely empty-handed.



Edmonton Eskimos' quarterback Mike Reilly runs with the ball during the West Division final against the Calgary Stampeders. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Why Edmonton will win



Ryan Tumilty
Metro | Edmonton

The Ottawa Redblacks have been the CFL's Cinderella story this year, going from a horrendous opening season to Grey Cup contenders in just their second year in the league.

Unfortunately for them, it's midnight and it's time to go home, completely empty-handed.

That the Edmonton Eskimos will win the Grey Cup on Sunday I have no doubt, but in case you need convincing I'd cite the superior offence, superior defence, superior fans and superior city.

You might think it unfair to say Edmonton has the better fans, but look at the hard numbers. Edmonton — in a year the team admits has been tough for attendance — brought out 34,000 people to the Western Final.

At capacity, Ottawa's stadium seats 10,000 less people. Their owners don't even imagine the possibility of the team being as popular as the Eskimos regularly are.

Then there's what's on the field.

Dave Campbell, who does colour for the Eskimos on 630 CHED, put it plain when asked about the team's chances.

"The Eskimos have the best defence in the CFL, they gave up the fewest points in the league," he said.

Fewest points allowed in the league you say? What of the offence though?

"They have been racking up the yards over the last four games. Mike Reilly has been playing the best football of his career," said Campbell.

Edmonton and Ottawa both beat strong opponents to get to Sunday's Grey Cup. Ottawa won by a touchdown in the dying seconds of the game, but

Edmonton had the lead at the half just kept adding.

"The Ottawa Redblacks struggled to get their way through the Eastern Final and the Edmonton Eskimos kind of cruised to get their way to a win," points out Campbell.

Campbell, who has already touched down in Winnipeg, said he expects Edmonton won't be the fan favourite in Winnipeg, but that won't matter.

"I don't think they mind being the villain here. They don't mind being the team that probably won't have the fan support."

It's hard to imagine a category where Ottawa has the edge on Sunday, perhaps most absurd mascot?

Ottawa's nickname is the city that fun forgot. Fans of both teams should watch the game Sunday night, but only Edmonton fans are really going to enjoy it.

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Talk like a fan: Tips for CFL bandwagon

GREY CUP

Just joined the Redblacks' party? Hop on

Are you a casual football fan only now hopping on the Redblacks bandwagon? Do you want a basic understanding of some of the players in this Sunday's Grey Cup game against the Edmonton Eskimos?

Don't worry, we've got you covered. Here are some things to know before watching the Redblacks try to bring Ottawa its first Grey Cup since 1976. We've also included some lines you can try out if you're watching the game in a social setting.

From rags to riches

This time last year, the Redblacks had finished a two-win inaugural season, wondering what went wrong. A year later, with a revamped receiving corps and other key changes, they're in the Grey Cup game. That kind of turnaround isn't supposed to happen, and anyone who says they saw this coming is probably lying to you.

You can say: "Honestly, I



Ottawa Redblacks quarterback Henry Burris looks for his name on the Grey Cup during a team breakfast in Winnipeg Thursday. The Edmonton Eskimos will play the Ottawa Redblacks in the 103rd Grey Cup Sunday. JONATHAN HAYWARD / THE CANADIAN PRESS

can't even believe we're watching the Redblacks in the Grey Cup game. This is so improbable."

The quarterback

Henry Burris, 40, has thrown for more than 360 touchdowns

and 60,000 yards in his illustrious CFL career. This season, he had more passing yards than anyone since Anthony Calvillo in 2004 and is the main reason for the Redblacks' sudden success.

You can say: "Henry Burris

may be 40, but he plays like he's 30, am I right everyone?"

Great offensive line

One of the many problems with last year's Redblacks was that Burris would frequently be sacked before he could get rid

of the ball. This year's much-improved offensive line, led by offseason signing SirVincent Rogers, has given the quarterback the time he needs to find open receivers.

You can say: "Wow, I really like the way SirVincent Rogers

protects Burris's blind side."

Hometown hero

The Redblacks have four receivers who caught more than 1,000 yards worth of passes this season. One of them is the speedy Brad Sinopoli, who led the league in yards after the catch. But did you know he was once a star quarterback for the Ottawa Gee-Gees? He was Canadian university football's most outstanding player in 2010, entered the CFL as a QB before converting to receiver in 2013.

You can say: "Remember Brad Sinopoli's days as a Gee-Gee quarterback? He's so versatile."

Chip off the old block

Redblacks head coach Rick Campbell, 44, is coaching against a franchise his father helped build. Hugh Campbell coached the Eskimos to five straight Grey Cup wins from 1978 to 1982. He was inducted into the CFL Hall of Fame in 2000 and retired as the team's CEO in 2006.

You can say: "Wouldn't it be great to finally see Rick Campbell step out of his father's long shadow?" THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Redblacks QB Henry Burris following practice in Winnipeg. JONATHAN HAYWARD / THE CANADIAN PRESS

SUNDAY

Where to watch the game



Michael Woods
Metro | Ottawa

Sunday is the first Grey Cup game featuring an Ottawa team in 34 years, so it's important to find a good place to watch it.

Here are some options for taking it in.

TD Place

The game may be in Winnipeg, but the Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group is hosting a viewing party for thousands of Redblacks fans in the arena at TD Place.

Concessions will be open and the covered ice surface will feature inflatable activities for

kids. OSEG mascots, the Redblacks cheer and dance teams will all be on hand.

The viewing party starts at 5 p.m. It's free, but tickets are required to get in. Those can be purchased at capitaltickets.ca. A ticket gets you free OC Transpo service.

The Granite Curling Club of West Ottawa

Yes, there's a football party at a curling club.

According to the club's website, you can watch the game "on our new 70-inch big screen TV purchased and donated by the Granite Day Ladies." There will be a chili supper available for \$5, too.

The bar

Don Cherry's in Kanata is hosting a Grey Cup party with Rough Riders alumni. Part of the proceeds will go to the CFL alumni association.

Downtown, you can count on the fine establishments in the ByWard Market and Elgin Street to show the game.

Sports bars will be busy, to be sure to arrive several hours before the 6 p.m. kickoff to nab a table.

A Grey Cup party

If you have a friend throwing a Grey Cup party, you will surely be welcomed with open arms if you show up with some chips, dip and libations.

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Natsis appeals convictions

DRUNK DRIVING CASE

Pembroke dentist hires Ghomeshi's lawyer



Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

Christy Natsis, the Pembroke dentist who was sentenced this month to five years in prison after a lengthy trial, has hired a high-profile Toronto lawyer to appeal her convictions.

The well-known Ottawa Valley dentist was convicted on May 29 of impaired driving causing death and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death. The two-car collision claimed the life of Bryan Casey, a father of three, on March 31, 2011.

On Nov. 12, Ontario Court Justice Neil Kozloff sentenced Natsis to five years in prison and handed her a 40-day concurrent sentence for breaching her bail by purchasing alcohol.

To appeal her case, Natsis, 51, has now hired criminal defence lawyer Marie Henein, the same lawyer former CBC radio host Jian Ghomeshi hired in his sexual assault case.

Natsis' appeal, filed with court on Tuesday, alleges Kozloff erred in law by admitting some Crown expert evidence.

Henein requests the Appeal Court of Ontario quash the two convictions and enter an acquittal or request a new trial.

The notice of appeal states that the judge erred in law by allowing expert evidence from a witness "the trial judge found to be biased."

"This ruling contravened the Supreme Court's holding that an expert who is unwilling or unable to provide, 'fair, objective and non-partisan assistance' to the court cannot be permitted to testify," the notice of appeal states.

The document also alleges the trial judge relied on flawed evidence from the Crown's key accident reconstruction expert, Const. Shawn Kelly.

"Relying on the expert's critical evidence despite his bias worked a substantial unfairness to the Appellant and could reasonably have affected the result," according to the grounds for appeal in the notice.

The notice of appeal also claims Kozloff overlooked more than 100 pages of written defence submissions and several days of cross-examination.

It also questioned the judge's decisions around the destruction of police draft reports.

Natsis is serving her sen-

tence at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre on Innes Road. Part of her sentence includes a four-year driving ban.

The appeal comes after a trial that lasted 55 days over a span of nearly three years.

After Kozloff delivered his sentence in a packed courtroom two weeks ago, Casey's family expressed their relief that the long trial finally came to an end.

William Casey and LeeEllen Carroll, Casey's father and widow, thanked the officers who responded to the scene and testified at the trial.

"None of us will ever understand why the crash had to happen. All of our children had their father taken away from them. I continue to do everything within my sphere of influence to ensure our children have the future they would have had, had their father not been stolen from them," said Carroll.

Casey's three kids are now aged 12, 14, and 16.

In his judgment, Kozloff described Natsis' offences as serious and "catastrophic" to the Casey family.

"This family has been utterly devastated by the conduct of Dr. Natsis," Kozloff told the court.

Relying on the expert's critical evidence despite his bias worked a substantial unfairness to the Appellant. The notice of appeal



Bryan Casey's father, William Casey, and Bryan Casey's widow, LeeEllen Carroll, leave the Ottawa courthouse on Nov. 12, after the sentencing of Dr. Christy Natsis. JOE LOFARO/METRO

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Geety MacLean, left, who grew up in Iran, with Dr. Jean Seely and a mammography machine at the Ottawa Hospital's Civic campus Women's Breast Health Centre. ERIN MCCracken/METROLAND MEDIA

Mammogram saved her life

BREAST CANCER

Survivor urges immigrant women to get screened

For Geety MacLean, a chance encounter with a woman whose name she barely knew proved life-saving.

After they ran into each other at work, MacLean, a Crystal

Beach resident, received an email from the woman urging her to get a mammogram.

But MacLean thought she couldn't possibly have breast cancer: Her risk factors were low. The mother of two had no signs or symptoms. And there was no family history. "But that was so not true," she said.

She went to her family doctor for a check-up and asked about having a mammogram. Though she was 45 — outside the 50- to 75-year-old range when women

can be screened through the Ontario Breast Screening Program without needing a referral, her family doctor arranged for a mammogram in March 2006. Then the doctor called to say further testing was needed.

"I thought, 'That's a death sentence. Holy cow,'" recalled MacLean. "But then I thought, there is no cancer in my family. There's no way it can be cancer."

But a biopsy revealed cancer throughout her right breast; she underwent a mastectomy. Screen-

ing, she said, saved her life.

Screening rates remain low, which prompted the Ottawa Hospital to host a public breast, colorectal and cervical cancer screening event at the Riverside campus in October.

"It was such a good way to encourage people to screen and to really identify people who don't have family physicians who might see that as a barrier to ... screening," said Dr. Jean Seely, the hospital's physician lead for the breast screening program.

Studies show only half of new immigrants are screened.

"New immigrants fear the word 'cancer,'" said Seely, who was involved in MacLean's diagnosis. "We are so much further ahead by early detection that it doesn't have to be that terrible outcome that they expect."

MacLean said growing up in Iran, cancer wasn't talked about. When she told her parents by phone the day before her surgery, "they thought I was going to die," she said.

MacLean's cancer had spread to her lymph nodes. "Now you have to go through chemo, radiation ... and a slew of tests," she said, adding, "I always said thank God that I had a guardian angel — that girl at work who sent me that email, and my family doctor who actually said, 'Let's do a baseline (mammogram).'"

Early diagnosis saves lives, Seely said. "Your long-term survival is almost 95 per cent. It's very, very good."

ERIN MCCracken/METROLAND MEDIA

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THINGS TO DO IN OTTAWA THIS WEEKEND

It's the last weekend of November — meaning our 'things to do list' could easily just contain holiday craft markets to check out. Make sure to clear your schedule Sunday night, as the Ottawa Redblacks will try for the Grey Cup at 6 p.m. **HALEY RITCHIE METRO**

**1 Welcoming refugees (Friday)**

Ottawa will soon be home to hundreds of new Syrian refugees — and many will be settling here during their first Canadian winter. All the more reason to lend a supportive hand. If you have ideas, head to Room 221 at the Bronson Centre on Friday at 7 p.m. for a panel discussion on the refugee crisis and how you can help.

2 Marching for Climate (Sunday)

Head to Ottawa City Hall on Sunday at 12 p.m. for the "100 per cent possible" march. There will be music, body painting, DJs and food trucks. Opening ceremonies begin at 1 p.m. and David Suzuki will be giving an address. The event is family friendly and attendees are instructed to wear green.

**3 Christmas Markets (all weekend)**

This weekend is bursting with craft fairs and holiday markets. On Saturday check out the Ottawa Farmers' Market Christmas Market at Lansdowne Park. The usual market vendors will be there along with guest vendors with holiday gift ideas from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Museum of History Christmas Market kicks off Thursday night and continues until Sunday, opening at 9:30 a.m. each morning. Admission is free and there will be over 75 vendors selling in the museum's dramatic Great Hall.

Gatineau Santa Parade (all weekend)

Père Noël will be stopping in Gatineau on Friday evening starting at 7 p.m. at the west end of Rue Principale.

Festivities will continue with a Christmas market all weekend. Saturday, Santa will be visiting Orleans for his Parade of Lights at 6 p.m. The parade will begin at Youville Drive and St-Joseph Boulevard. Donations will be collected along the route.

**5 Village of Lights (Saturday)**

This week marks the kickoff of several holiday lighting displays. On Saturday head to the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum for the tree lighting ceremony starting at 4:30 p.m. There's lots going on after the weekend as well. On Wednesday head to Parliament Hill for the "Christmas Lights Across Canada" illumination ceremony at 7 p.m.

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Woman accuses label of appropriation



A model walks the runway during the KTZ show on January 11, in London, England. Right: The design from which the KTZ sweater was taken, according to Nunavut's Salome Awa. GETTY IMAGES; MYSTIC SEAPORT PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTION/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

FASHION

Design stolen off shaman's parka: Woman from Nunavut

Salome Awa says she was furious to discover that a U.K. fashion label had unveiled a sweatshirt with a design that looks nearly identical to one created by her great-grandfather.

But more than anger, the Nunavut woman said she felt shocked that her ancestor's unique design had been taken without permission.

"I went through all the

garments and there it was: my great-grandfather's garment, designed exactly the same way as he envisioned," Awa, a CBC Nunavut morning show producer, told the Star in a telephone interview on Thursday morning.

"I was shocked, actually, because it's sacred."

Her great-grandfather was a shaman, Awa explained. He had asked his wife to make a unique parka with hands on the front to protect him from someone who might try to push him into the ocean and drown him.

Danish explorer Knud Rasmussen took a photo of her great-grandfather in the parka during his travels and visits

with Inuit families in Canada's Arctic in the 1920s, Awa said.

The photo, which dates back to 1922, was published in the book *Northern Voices: Inuit Writing in English*.

"To wear it (the design) is almost like (a) mockery of my great-grandfather's spiritual well-being," Awa said. "There's no other garment like it anywhere else in this world."

London-based label KTZ did not respond to Torstar News Service's request for comment.

KTZ unveiled the sweater as part of its Fall 2015 men's collection and the company was selling the "shaman to-weling sweatshirt" online for about \$845 Cdn. Toronto-based shop CNTRBND is also selling

it for \$925.

KTZ says its clothes are known for their "raw energy and contemporary urban edge, but also for embracing ethnographic references and multiculturalism."

But the company has been accused of appropriating Indigenous designs in the past. Last year, Northern Cheyenne/Crow designer Bethany Yellowtail accused KTZ of using her designs without permission.

She told the Star she contacted an intellectual property lawyer about possible legal action, but that she would discuss the issue with her family members before making any decisions.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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VANCOUVER

'One punch' assaults lead to injury, death



Matt Kieltka
Metro | Vancouver

A Vancouver-area man has suffered life-altering injuries and has been in hospital for a month after being sucker punched in the city's entertainment district.

And police — in a rare public plea made Thursday — say he's far from the only victim.

So far this year, Vancouver police have responded to 10 sudden "one punch" assaults, all leading to unsuspecting victims being knocked unconscious and suffering serious injuries. Three of the victims

have died.

"This could happen to you or me walking down the street," said Vancouver police spokesman Const. Brian Montague. "We do have individuals that come into the city that are looking for trouble, looking to get into a fight, and unfortunately this is the result sometimes."

"As a victim, it's hard to say to people how to avoid a situation like this. Our plea is for those making a conscious decision to put their hand into a fist and take a swing. It will cause life-altering injuries or death. And (the suspects') lives will be changed as well. We will arrest them and they will find themselves in court."

IN BRIEF

Canada's Miss World barred from entering China

Canada's Miss World contestant says she was barred Thursday from entering China to take part in this year's pageant because of her outspoken views on human rights abuses in the communist country.

Anastasia Lin, who was born in China and went to high school in the Vancouver area, said in a statement on her Facebook page that she was unable to board her connecting flight from Hong Kong to the Chinese resort city of Sanya, where the Miss World final is taking place Dec. 19.

THANDI FLETCHER/METRO

EMPEROR HAUTE COUTURE

Woman selling Harper painting

When former bureaucrat Danielle Potvin first laid eyes on Stephen Harper's completely nude body, she knew she had to take him home.

A painting of him, that is.

"It's the best piece of fine art in Canada," said Potvin.

She describes it as "audacious" and "so interesting."

"It's such a strong image."

The piece shows a relaxed Harper lounging, with a discreet smile, on a chaise surrounded by a group of suited men and single woman, who is seen handing him what can only be assumed to be a cup of Tim Hortons coffee.

And now it's on sale — just in time for the holiday season.

Emperor Haute Couture, as it's called, made headlines in 2012 when artist Margaret Sutherland



Artist Margaret Sutherland, left, and Danielle Potvin. This nude painting of Stephen Harper, titled *Emperor Haute Couture*, was originally sold to Potvin for \$5,750 in 2012.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

first sold it to Potvin.

Potvin originally bought the painting for \$5,750. Now she's being offered upwards of \$12,000 for the piece.

She's even received a call from

someone in Nebraska looking to get their hands on it.

"People know this painting will be worth a lot more in a few years," said Potvin.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

INTERVIEW

Trudeau issues retort

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has used an interview with an influential BBC current affairs show in London to issue his most pungent retort yet to his Canadian detractors.

Trudeau, 43, endured more than two years of Conservative party attack ads declaring him “just not ready” before sweeping prime minister Stephen Harper from power in last month’s federal election.

On BBC television’s News-Night program, Trudeau delivered a retort that could be seen as a direct shot at Harper and other Conservative partisans.

“There’s an awful lot of people who sort of shrugged and said he has nothing but a name to go on and found themselves slightly bewildered as I left them in the dust.”

Trudeau told the BBC that this year’s federal election campaign showed the momentary appeal of divisive policy stances.

“But when you get right down to it, when citizens take a long hard look in the ballot box at actually voting against your neighbours, against someone who’s different from you — in pluralistic societies like we have it becomes very difficult to sustain the hatred or the fear of the shopkeeper down the street or your colleague two cubicles over,” said Trudeau. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Justin Trudeau
THE CANADIAN PRESS



Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion speaks with the media ahead of the Commonwealths Heads of Government meeting, on Thursday in Valletta, Malta. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Malta called Paris ‘training camp’

CLIMATE TALKS

But India takes a pass on this year’s meeting of 53 countries

Leaders of 53 Commonwealth countries are grappling with their own negotiations on addressing climate change in what Canada’s foreign affairs minister calls a “training camp” for next week’s United Nations conference in France.

“You have the world in 53 nations here,” Stéphane Dion said Thursday shortly after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau arrived in Malta for the three-day summit of Commonwealth

heads of government.

“And the debates we have had since I came yesterday are very, let’s say, lively. I’m sure they will be repeated in the next two weeks in Paris.”

French President Francois Hollande is to make an extraordinary address to the leaders here Friday in what appears to be the first appearance by a French head of state at the biennial Commonwealth meeting — a gathering of countries formerly under British rule.

Hollande will arrive from Russia, where he was seeking to secure a common front in the military fight against Islamic militants. It seems likely he’ll plumb that theme with the Commonwealth countries as well, but the reason for his visit

is to rally support for an international climate agreement.

Dion’s characterization of “lively” Commonwealth climate talks hints at the challenge ahead.

India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the leader of the most populous Commonwealth country with an exponentially growing appetite for coal-fired electricity generation, is taking a pass on this year’s Commonwealth meeting amid concerns that the developing subcontinent poses a major obstacle to a comprehensive climate deal.

India’s “coal minister” Piyush Goyal is on record saying the world’s third-largest producer of greenhouse gases won’t be constrained by emis-

+ AIR WAR

A senior Trudeau adviser said Cameron did not pressure Trudeau to reconsider his CF-18 decision when the two prime ministers met in London on Wednesday. In fact, the adviser said, not a single world leader has questioned Canada’s pending withdrawal from the air war during the last two weeks.

sions limits when developed countries have spent the past century pouring carbon into the Earth’s atmosphere.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

REFUGEE RELIEF

Feds give \$100M to UN

The Liberal government’s long-awaited \$100 million contribution to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to help fleeing Syrians is destined for a half-empty international aid bucket.

The UN refugee agency has only raised 45 per cent of the \$4.5 billion it sought for 2015 to assist the 4.3 million refugees who have fled Syria for Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq, according to its latest statistics.

Canada’s contribution, announced Thursday, fulfils a Liberal campaign promise from the federal election, a contribution that includes \$10 million for the UN refugee agency to help it select eligible Syrians for settlement in Canada over the next few months.

“Canada is coming out very strongly, not only with this exceptional program of resettling the 25,000 Syrian refugees, but the financial support to UNHCR is absolutely crucial,” Furio de Angelis, the UN agency’s Ottawa representative, told The Canadian Press.

“Unfortunately our programs are underfunded, and not only UNHCR programs but in general humanitarian programs (are) underfunded.”

Government officials in the newly re-named Global Affairs Department acknowledged the vast international funding shortcoming, but said Canada was doing its part because it was still among the top 10 international donors.

International Development Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau said the government will move quickly to disburse the funds that it has already announced, but was noncommittal about whether more might be pledged in the future.

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UNITED STATES

Embrace 'generosity': Obama

President Barack Obama appealed anew for acceptance of Syrian refugees, saying "so much of our greatness comes from our generosity."

In his weekly radio address broadcast Thursday, Obama noted his commitment to accept an additional 10,000 Syrian refugees this year and argued that the policy is in

keeping with U.S. tradition.

Obama compared Syrian refugees to the first Pilgrims who arrived in present-day Massachusetts on the Mayflower ship in 1620. Many of them separatists from the Church of England, the Pilgrims have come to symbolize the quest for religious freedom in America.

He said he has been "touched by the generosity of Americans who've written me letters and emails in recent weeks, offering to open their homes to refugees fleeing the brutality of ISIL."

Obama's plan to receive thousands of additional Syrian refugees has come under heavy criticism in Congress and has become a key part of the 2016 presidential campaign rhetoric. Some lawmakers, voicing concerns about homeland security, are pressing for legislation further tightening the conditions under which refugees can be admitted.

"Now, people should remember that no refugee can enter our borders until they undergo the highest security checks of anyone travelling to the United States," Obama said. "That was the case before Paris, and it's the case now. And what happened in Paris hasn't stopped Americans from opening their arms anyway."

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U.S. President Barack Obama THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

PARIS ATTACKS

Citizens still anxious: Experts

At a Paris train station, the zap of a pigeon getting electrocuted on the tracks is enough to send some jittery people scurrying for cover.

And in the aftermath of the devastating Nov. 13 attacks on Paris, the centre of Brussels has often been deserted as armed soldiers patrol tourist sites amid repeated government warnings that a terrorist attack is "serious and imminent."

Some experts say it will take months for Europeans to psychologically adapt to life after the Paris attacks and warn that some government measures intended to reassure people may backfire, creating instead the impression of cities under siege.

“They look like bad guys with their faces all covered even if they are maybe very nice.”

Lotte Achterberg on the armed soldiers in Brussels

"We go about our daily lives and every so often they're punctuated by something outrageous like a terrorist attack on an average Friday night," said Dr. David Purves of the British Psychological Society. "After that shock, something that is highly statistic-

ally unusual may suddenly feel much more likely to happen."

Purves said measures meant to reassure people, like machine-gun-toting soldiers and closed subways, might actually feel like the opposite.

"In a time of uncertainty, we may interpret these signs of safety instead as reasons to be fearful, like why would we need armed soldiers unless there was danger?"

Belgian university student Lotte Achterberg said she could certainly do without the now-ubiquitous soldiers guarding Brussels. "It's not a nice feeling to see them everywhere with their big guns," she said.

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GREECE TENSION MOUNTS AT NORTHERN BORDER A man kneels before a Macedonian police officer in an effort to cross the border, near the northern Greek village of Idomeni, Thursday. Scores of migrants stranded at Greece's northern border have clashed with police while trying to force their way into Macedonia. GIANNIS PAPANIKOS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russia slaps Turkey with trade sanctions

RETALIATION

Dispute over downed plane intensifies

A tug-of-war over a Russian warplane shot down by a Turkish fighter jet at the border with Syria escalated Thursday, with Moscow drafting a slew of economic sanctions against Turkey and the Turkish president saying on a defiant note that his military is ready to do the same if another air intrusion happens.

The spat reflected a clash of ambitions of two strongman leaders, neither of whom appeared willing to back down and search for a compromise.

Turkey shot down the Russian Su-24 military jet on Tuesday, insisting it had violated its airspace despite repeated warnings. The incident marked the first time in half a century when a NATO member shot down a Russian plane, raising the threat of a military confrontation between the alliance

+ RECORDINGS

Turkey has released audio recordings of what it says are the Turkish military's repeated warnings to the pilot of a Russian bomber before it was shot down at the border with Syria — audio that grows increasingly more agitated.

A Russian airman who survived the shoot-down denied veering into Turkey's airspace "even for a single second." Turkey insists the plane was in its airspace for 17 seconds.

and Moscow.

Russia's President Vladimir Putin denounced the Turkish action as a "treacherous stab in the back," and insisted that the plane was downed over the Syrian territory in violation of the international law.

"Until that moment, we haven't heard a clear apology from Turkey's top political leadership, or an offer to compensate for the dam-

age or a promise to punish the criminals who committed that crime," he said in the Kremlin while receiving credentials from several ambassadors. "It gives an impression that the Turkish leadership is deliberately driving the Russian-Turkish relations into a deadlock, and we regret that."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was in no mood to apologize, and warned that Ankara would act in the same way in case of another intrusion.

"Faced with the same violation today, Turkey would give the same response," Erdogan said.

"It's the country that carried out the violation which should question itself and take measures to prevent it from happening again, not the country that was subjected to a violation."

Erdogan said Turkey had not specifically targeted Russia when it shot down the plane, saying it was "an automatic response" in line with its rules of engagement.

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A 17-year-old mother sits with her baby in the Inhassune village, southern Mozambique. In Mozambique there are no laws preventing child marriages. SHIRAAZ MOHAMED/AP PHOTO

'Lost childhoods, shattered futures'

AFRICA

Calls for action as brutal plight of child brides is highlighted

The 14-year-old girl had just arrived home from school when her family told her to swap her school uniform for traditional wedding robes. While she had been sitting in her seventh grade classroom in South Africa, her male relatives had received a \$570 bride price for her from a man she'd never met who was twice her age.

As is the case with many child brides, beatings and rape were common in her new marital home. After a number of failed escape attempts, she finally made it over a fence and ran to the nearest police station. She then filed charges for the case that would become the first criminal prosecution of child marriage in South Africa.

An estimated 125 million

African girls are child brides, with that number expected to rise to 310 million by 2050, creating a legacy of "lost childhoods and shattered futures," according to a report released by UNICEF on Thursday that demanded more aggressive government actions to end the practice.

Across Africa girls are being married off to pay off family debts, to keep them free of sin or simply because it's tradition, but the lives of these child brides are ones of violence, poverty and increased risk of HIV, said UNICEF.

In last year's case in South Africa, the girl's husband was convicted of rape, assault and human trafficking and sentenced to 22 years in prison, but he maintained that he was following traditional practices.

Even in South Africa, with its liberal constitution and a litany of laws to protect child

brides, the traditional practice of "ukuthwala" often supersedes modern laws.

Where once a young man would take a consenting girl home to his village to convince her family to agree to marriage, now some aging men are twisting the practice and abducting young girls, raping them, and forcing them into a union that often resembles slavery, according to the commission.

In Ethiopia, abductions and forced marriages were widely practiced until officially outlawed in 2004. In Mozambique, child marriage is a way out of poverty — one less mouth to feed and a windfall from the dowry.

"My parents are poor, they cannot afford to look after me," said a 16-year-old, who has a 1-year-old child. "I helped my family when I got married, they no longer need to support me."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

\$570

The price reportedly paid for a 14-year-old child bride in South Africa.



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MINNEAPOLIS

Funeral held for black man killed by police



Demonstrators outside the Minneapolis's 4th Precinct.

RICHARD TSONG-TAATARI/STAR TRIBUNE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hundreds of people filled a Minneapolis church on Wednesday for the funeral of a black man whose death in a confrontation with police has sparked days of ongoing protests, while charges were pending against four men suspected in a shooting that wounded several of the protesters.

Impassioned speeches from pastors and Jamar Clark's relatives were occasionally interrupted by shouts and applause

inside the cavernous Shiloh Temple International Ministries. Several relatives wore white T-shirts that read, "I matter," with Clark's picture on the back.

Programs also adorned with a photo of Clark described the 24-year-old as a man who "liked to swim, fish, listen to music, play basketball, be with family and take trips to Charlotte, North Carolina."

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+ CHICAGO

A march protesting the videotaped slaying of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald by a Chicago police officer is planned Friday in the city's busiest shopping district on the busiest shopping day of the year.



A clown marches by heavily armed police standing guard during the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York on Thursday. ANDRES KUDACKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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NYPD out in full force

MANHATTAN

Thanksgiving Day Parade under heavy police security

Giant balloons took to the clear, sunny sky over midtown Manhattan on Thursday for the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, with spectators lining up along the parade route and a heavy police presence keeping a watchful eye.

The parade, in its 89th year, included marching bands and floats to go along with Hello Kitty, Snoopy, Paddington and other giant balloons. The performers were expected to include Jordin Sparks, Shawn Mendes and Pat Benatar.

City officials have said there are no known, credible threats against New York following the recent attacks in Paris and a video purportedly produced by ISIL that contained video clips of Times Square. But Police Commissioner William Bratton said more than 2,500 officers will be stationed

along the parade route for the Thanksgiving Day festivities — the largest number of officers the department has ever assigned to the event.

As the parade made its way through midtown Manhattan, helicopters flew overhead and officers stood on top of mobile command centre vans to watch the crowds. Police even stood on top of the marquee at Radio City Music Hall.

The parade is a traditional part of Thanksgiving, when Americans commemorate a 1621 feast shared by colonists known as Pilgrims and Native Americans in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Pamela and Tom Popp of Ridgefield, New Jersey said they've come to the city every year for the parade for at least 20 years.

"It's just a very special part of our holiday," Pamela Popp said. "We're very proud of New York City and this wonderful tradition."

Her husband said security was heavier than in past years. "I see the cops on top of Radio City," Tom Popp said. "Never saw that before."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Japanese PM mocked over annual U.S. turkey pardon

President Barack Obama on Wednesday granted amnesty from the dinner table to two turkeys named "Honest" and "Abe." But a translation glitch in Chinese media replaced the character for single-syllable "Abe" with the surname of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Several commenters in Chinese social media fo-

cused on comparing the prime minister to an animal. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kids bullying redheads inspired by South Park

A statement from Melrose Public Schools outside Boston says seventh-graders were imitating an episode from the TV cartoon series South Park when they kicked redhead students last Friday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boats come to the rescue

SOUTH ASIA

Cab company sends rowers to save Indian flood victims

A taxi company in India has swapped cabs for boats, as it ramped up efforts to rescue flood victims in the southern city of Chennai last week.

Ola, a private taxi app similar to Uber, explained on Twitter that the company had been “ferrying people out from water-logged areas” in the city after vehicles couldn’t access flooded roads.

At least 175 people have died as heavy rainfall pounds Tamil Nadu and submerged parts of the state capital, Chennai, and the surrounding areas.

Schools, hospitals and homes are flooded, and more rain is expected later this week.

The idea for #OlaBoats appears to have started out as a social media joke, but quickly transformed into reality when Ola sent out its first rescue boats on Nov. 17.

The boats were manned by professional rowers and fishermen, who rescued people and provided food and drinking water for free, The Hindu reported.

The boats were equipped with two rowers and umbrellas and could ferry five to nine people per trip.

People in Chennai and across India commended the company’s initiative.

“Now that’s the only good news that has come out of



Taxi app Ola has swapped cabs for boats in the flood-ravaged Indian city of Chennai. CONTRIBUTED/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Chennai amidst floods. Way to go,” said Abhishek Jain on Twitter.

“Great job in Chennai. You help the people in distress and they will remember you. Kudos,” Nileshe Rupapara added.

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Now that’s the only good news that has come out of Chennai amidst floods. Way to go.

Twitter user Abhishek Jain

BANGLADESH

Gunmen assault mosque

At least five assailants opened fire Thursday on devotees during evening prayers at a Shiite mosque in northern Bangladesh, leaving one person dead and three others wounded, police said.

Bogra district police Chief Mohammed Asaduzzaman said that the assailants fled after the attack, which occurred just after sunset at the mosque in Haripur village.

He said a mosque official in his 70s who led the prayers died from bullet injuries and the three others were being

treated at a hospital.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

Shiites are a minority in Sunni-majority Bangladesh, a Muslim-majority nation of 160 million people.

The country has been rocked this year by a series of attacks allegedly carried out by radical groups. Since February, four secular bloggers, a publisher and two foreigners have been killed, raising concern that religious extremism is growing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



A man injured in an attack on a Shiite mosque is carried for treatment in Bogra district, Bangladesh, on Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Tunisia arrests 30 after suicide bombing

Tunisian authorities have detained 30 people suspected of having extremist links after a suicide bombing targeting presidential guards, and identified the bomber as a local street vendor.

The Interior Ministry said in a statement Thursday that forensic police identified the attacker as 27-year-old Houssam ben Hedi ben Miled Abdelli by his DNA. It said he was from a working-class neighbourhood on the edge of Tunis.

In a later statement, the ministry said it detained 30 people suspected of links to extremist groups and seized several weapons in 526 raids around the country over the past 24 hours. It didn’t say whether any of the suspects had ties to the attack.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boko Haram kills 16 in village attack: Witnesses

Suspected Boko Haram militants raided a village in southeastern Niger, killing 16 people and looting shops, witnesses said Thursday.

The attack occurred on Wednesday night in a village not far from the border with Nigeria, said Adam Boukarna, who runs a radio station in the nearby town of Diffa.

“The assailants arrived on motorbikes and opened fire on anything that moved before pillaging shops and other business,” Boukarna said.

Southeast Niger borders Boko Haram’s base in northeast Nigeria, and the region has been hit multiple times by the Nigeria-based extremists.

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An Ola boat in action. CONTRIBUTED/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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SOUTH AFRICA

Judge bins ban on rhino horn trade

A South African court on Thursday opened the way to allowing local trade in rhino horns, alarming some conservationists who warned the ruling leaves rhinos even more vulnerable to poachers who are slaughtering them in record numbers.

South Africa's environment ministry said it will appeal a judge's decision in Pretoria to rescind a nearly seven-year-old moratorium on the domestic trade in rhino horns, meaning the ban is likely to stay in place pending the outcome of that appeal.

The ruling by Judge Francis Legodi in the North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria stirred an often acrimonious debate between those who say legalization will spur poaching in South Africa, and rhino breeders and others who believe a regulated trade that allows the sale of horn stockpiles and the harvesting of horns from living rhinos will undercut poaching.

Legodi said the South African government had failed to properly consult the public before imposing the moratorium in 2009 and also questioned its effectiveness, noting that

22,000

Estimated number of rhinos in South Africa, more than 80 per cent of the global rhino population.

rhino poaching surged to record levels after the ban.

"What disastrous implications would be brought about by the immediate lifting of the moratorium? I cannot think of any," Legodi said in a 39-page ruling. He cited statistics showing the number of rhinos poached in 2008, before the ban, was just below 100, compared to about 1,200 last year.

Two South African rhino owners took the South African government to court seeking to overturn a moratorium on the domestic trade in rhino horn imposed in 2009. One of them, John Hume, has four metric tons of legally obtained rhino horn and his investment in rhinos and their horns is worth millions of dollars, court documents say.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Protesters carry signs featuring the image of Turing Pharmaceuticals' CEO Martin Shkreli in front the building that houses the company's offices in New York, during a protest in October of pharmaceutical drug pricing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Turing reneges on cutting drug's price

PHARMACEUTICALS

Rival's 99-cent version selling well

After weeks of criticism from patients, doctors and other drugmakers for hiking a life-saving medicine's price more than fifty-fold, Turing Pharmaceuticals is reneging on its pledge to cut the \$750-per-pill price.

Instead, the small biotech company is reducing what it charges hospitals, by up to 50 per cent, for its parasitic infection treatment, Daraprim. Most patients' co-payments will be capped at \$10 or less a month. But insurers will be stuck with the bulk of the \$750 tab. That drives up future treatment and

\$750

The per-pill cost of Daraprim, Turing's parasitic infection treatment.

insurance costs.

Daraprim is the preferred treatment for a rare parasitic infection, toxoplasmosis, which mainly threatens people with weak immune

systems, and pregnant women, because it can kill their baby. Turing's move comes after a pharmacy that compounds prescription drugs for individ-

ual patients, Imprimis Pharmaceuticals, started selling a custom-made version for 99 cents per capsule. Those sales weren't a factor in Turing's pricing strategy, chief marketing officer Nancy Retzlaff said Wednesday.

Imprimis CEO Mark Baum said Wednesday orders are pouring in for its version of Daraprim from doctors, and the company has dispensed more than 2,500 capsules since Oct. 22. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SURVEY

Nearly 40 per cent fought to pay bills this past year

Nearly 40 per cent of Canadians have struggled to cover their household expenses at least once in the past year, a new survey from Manulife Bank suggests.

Lines of credit were the most popular solution for those who came up short, with 33 per cent reporting that they accessed one the last time they were short on funds.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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ADVICE

Treat charity like investments

More than nine in 10 Canadians give to charity every year, but experts advise treating those donations like an investment.

Philanthropy professionals and charity watchdogs say that as the holiday season nears and the airwaves fill with messages of altruism, you should still analyze your chosen charities the same way you would research the purchase of mutual funds or property.

Financial adviser Kate Bahen, managing director of watchdog group Charity Intelligence Can-

ada, says things to look for include whether the charity's financial statements are audited and up-to-date, if the charity has an independent oversight board, and if it spends more on programs than administration and fundraising.

"People need to look at that giving as an investment," she says. "If they could bring that business brain to the giving table, I think that's where we would see such huge change in Canada for the good."

Financial planner Cynthia Kett says it's best to form long-

term relationships with charities that share your values, instead of doling out smaller gifts throughout the year.

"I think it's useful to be strategic in your giving," she says.

When it comes to taxes, Kett says it's important to understand the nuances of the charitable giving tax credit.

Because the first \$200 has a lower credit, married couples can save a little money by combining their donations on one return and having the higher-income spouse claim the credit.

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READERS RESPOND: MELITA'S STORY

In the Nov. 25 issue of Metro, one of our editors shared a personal tale of fleeing to Canada at the age of nine, after her father was imprisoned at a concentration camp in Bosnia and Herzegovina simply for being Muslim. Dozens of readers have reached out with good wishes — and heartfelt refugee and immigration stories of their own.



"I think this will open a lot of readers' eyes"

Hi Melita,

Every day, I commute and read Metro in the morning. Most of the times, I scan headlines and doze off to music I have playing. But this morning, I was glued to your story, and I really appreciate how you have shared your own personal experience. I think this will open a lot of readers' eyes to the current refugee issue.

Shuang Shan

As an immigrant myself, although I came under much better circumstances, I was very moved by your family's story.

"It is a welcome antidote to all the recent negativity"

Melita,

Thank you for your fine article. It is a welcome antidote to all the recent negativity surrounding Syrian refugees and Muslims. As an immigrant myself, although I came here under much better circumstances, I was very moved by your family's story.

Keep up the good work,
David Bednar

"I am so glad that you were able to survive"

Good morning Melita,

While I have been a supporter of the Liberals' plan to bring in the 25,000 refugees, I will readily admit that I haven't spent too much time thinking about the individuals truly affected, who are waiting to be screened and authorized by the UN and Canadian government.

Your story provides a true example of how difficult it must've been for your family to transition to life in Canada.

I am so glad that you and your family were able to survive and thrive in this country, and it makes me so grateful for what my family has really taken for granted.

Just know that your story has touched at least one person today, though I have no doubt that it will touch the hearts of millions.

Take care,
Jennifer Hiltz

"I am the son of a political refugee from Hungary"

Dear Melita,

Many thanks for the nice article. The front-page pictures hit hard in a good way. I am the son of a political refugee from Hungary who refused to go back to the communist ways after the failed revolution of 1956. The pictures of your dad are a great resemblance to my dad, and they brought me to tears. He has been gone now for almost 12 years, but he was the most patriotic Canadian I know. He married my mom, a French-Canadian, and raised

us three boys on a great work ethic and a huge respect for democracy. When I enlisted as an army reservist with the Governor General's Foot Guards (Yes, those soldiers on Parliament Hill) to assist with paying my way through four years of college, he beamed with pride.

I could say much more, and so could you. I am sure enough of a heartfelt story is there to provide material for a book!

Merci beaucoup! Thanks again! Köszönöm szépen!

Michel Imre Zoltan Joseph Asbóth

"I hope and pray that other refugees succeed"

Hi Melita,

Thank you for sharing your refugee story. Your parents are so courageous and strong. I'm sure it was incredibly difficult for them and huge sacrifices were made, but they did it for you and your brother.

I can't imagine the difficulty of risking your life with your children, and even the days and nights spent in whichever place you were allowed to stop or rest. It was important that you shared this story, since many people don't realize what immigrants have gone through.

Me and my family also immigrated to this country, and we all know for a fact that we have to work or study hard in order to prove our worth to Canadian society, most especially to those who claim they are the "true Canadians."

I am really fascinated by tales of migration and refugee stories, and I am so pleased that everything worked out well for your family.

I hope and pray that other refugees succeed in their new homes and new lives. I always believe in humanity's faith, hope and compassion despite the recent conflicts and stigma of terrorism haunting the world.

Thanks and regards,
Czarjeff Laban

Melita Kuburas is an associate managing editor at Metro. You can read her story at metronews.ca. She can be reached at melita.kuburas@metronews.ca.

LETTERS HAVE BEEN CONDENSED

metroview

If we think outside the mailbox, we can build real community



Jason Logan
Metro Toronto

Can we talk about community mailboxes?

By now you've no doubt picked your side, either with the robot-loving erstwhile PM and his ugly, grey mailbox banks, or with the more robust-haired champion of door-to-door delivery.

But the election is over and the outcome is clear: community mailboxes are out. So why now talk of sides? Don't we have more pressing concerns? The phase-out of home delivery has been scrapped in mid-flow: in 2014, Canada Post converted 100,000 addresses to community boxes; in 2015, it had planned to do 900,000 more. At least 460,000 of those conversions were already underway, meaning there must be tens of thousands of community mailboxes sitting in warehouses, destined for the garbage heap and the "sunk costs" column.

What if "community mailboxes" isn't an oxymoron?

Don't get me wrong. I, like you, have seen the prophylactic maple-leaf decal and the back-angled roof meant to protect the boxes from snow and rain while making no such accommodation for users. They don't just look like they were designed by a committee of engineers; they actually were. Plus, I love my mail carrier.

Here's the thing, though: in an era of Facetime and delivery drones, communication is at a crossroads, if not a crisis.

This should be an opportunity to rethink, not sentimentalize.

I recently met with the governor general at the Centre for Social Innovation in Toronto, and he noted that when a group of people picks up mail in a central place they create a little community. I led a workshop this summer on this point: how to turn these boxes into community assets. Eventually we were contacted by a Canada Post representative, who said, "We are listening." But listening is not enough.

In urban centres and suburbs, where the community-mailbox fight has been fiercest, there remains, despite bars and bookstores, a need for places to gather 'round. A shared box could become a mini town square, a place to pick up news, ideas and seeds for the garden.

Or what if we got rid of the boxes but kept the idea of central mail pickup? What if packages flowed in and out of your local coffee shop? What if Canada Post stores sold vintage stamps, postcards and stationery? What if the postal workers were trained in community policing and home care? What if getting the mail meant leaving your house, looking up from your phone and finding common ground?

"Stop right there!" you say. We can't afford to play and experiment. I say we can't afford not to. It's with what-ifs that we start a process of thinking outside the slanty-roofed box and remaking our country.

My name is Jason. I did not vote for Harper, and I'm kind of into community mailboxes.

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Radcliffe keeps his ego in check

CELEBRITY

Actor doesn't see his status as actually being about him

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada



At the 2012 Canadian premier of *The Woman in Black* a young woman yelled, "I love you!" as Daniel Radcliffe and I took the stage to introduce the film.

"I love you too," he replied with a smirk. "But I think we should see other people."

The audience laughed but probably missed the double meaning of his comment. For ten years Radcliffe was the face of Harry Potter, one of the biggest grossing movie franchises ever. Potter ended in 2011 (for Radcliffe, anyway) and the actor has moved on, and hopes his audience will follow along.

This week he's taking on another classic character, one played in the past by everyone from Bela Lugosi to Marty Feldman. In *Victor Frankenstein* he transcends Igor's traditional, "Yes master," function to become the movie's moral compass and emotional core. A reimagining of the Frankenstein story that focuses on the men rather than the monster, it's a change of pace from an actor who likes to shake it up, career-wise.

"I want to try my hand at as many things as possible,"



Harry Potter no more: Daniel Radcliffe stars as Igor in *Victor Frankenstein*, a dynamic and thrilling twist on a legendary tale.

HANDOUT

he told me in 2014. "Having played one character for a very long time, that builds up in you a desire to play a number of different characters and do as much different work as you can. I like that you can't predict what my next thing is going to be."

Since Potter wrapped he has kept audiences guessing. From the Gothic horror of *Woman in*

Black and *The F Word*'s light romance to a biographical look at the Beat Generation in *Kill Your Darlings* and the twisted morality of *Horns*, the only predictable thing about his career is its unpredictability.

"It's about finding out what I'm good at, finding out which things I prefer doing because I've only done Potter up until a few years ago, so now this

period is really me going, 'If I had my choice.'

Being that I do have a semblance of control over my career, — which most actors my age don't — I feel I might not always have this opportunity to try loads of different things."

Radcliffe credits working with the likes of Alan Rickman, Gary Oldman and David Tennant on the Potter films with

giving him some perspective on how to manage his career.

"The defining feature of Alan, Gary, David and many more that I've worked with, is that they never want to stop learning," Radcliffe told me during an interview for *The Women in Black*.

"They never feel they are finished. Alan Rickman is constantly trying to get better and

MOVIE RATINGS
by Richard Crouse

Creed ★★★★★
The Good Dinosaur ★★★
Victor Frankenstein ★★★
Trumbo ★★

HOW RATING WORKS

★★★★★ SEE IT
★★★★ WORTHWHILE
★★★ UP TO YOU
★ SKIP IT

refined. When you see that in someone who is A) Brilliant and B) 30 years older than you, it's very inspiring to see they have gone through their whole careers and never been satisfied."

Radcliffe has perspective on where he'd like his career to go, but what about the fame that came along with playing Harry Potter? The next day after *The Woman in Black* premier I asked him about the screaming fans that greeted him and what that does to his ego.

"The thing you have to remind yourself is that it's not about me. It's about the fact that I played this character who became beloved. Anyone who took on this character would be getting this reaction. When I'm home, smoking a cigarette and it's cold and I'm eating half a pizza — you have to take a picture of yourself then and play it to yourself when you're on the red carpets and go, 'Yeah, you're not all that.'"



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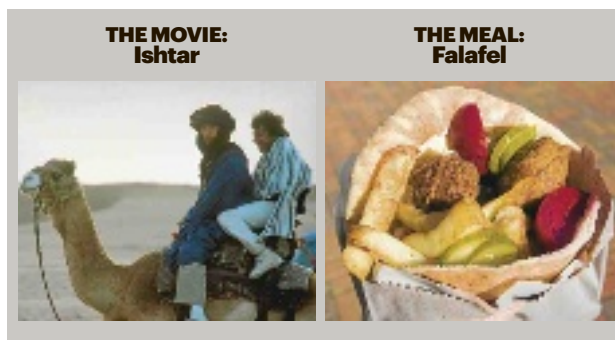
'If all of the people who hate Ishtar had seen it,' director Elaine May said in 2006, 'I would be a rich woman today.'

were directed by women, for example — but by the conflicting thesis and conclusion.

There's nostalgia for a time when old Hollywood churned out roles for complicated, messy women — when "Hollywood moguls actually cared about art." There's admiration for women, like *Transparent's* Jill Soloway and *Girls'* Lena Dunham, who are making female-driven shows; praise for producers who are championing women's voices and stories; and lamentations by the likes of Penny Marshall for studios' love of Superman and Batman.

Yes, yes and yes! I thought. Hollywood doesn't want you pulling up a chair at their buffet of insipid entertainment, ladies? Then start cooking up something new and improved!

But then, the story ends with a 35-year-old female director asking "Why can't I



direct Superman?"

So the solution for more female driven projects is to have a woman helm another Superman? That will solve the gender imbalance in Hollywood? Won't that just reinforce the infantilizing trends that seem to dominate North American culture?

"Joining men in the race to the bottom in terms of the culture might be equitable," my partner Simon argued,

"but it's not enlightened. If women aspire towards parity in the Hollywood superhero genre, I'm not so sure I'd call it an achievement."

But it was a quote from a young female director about women not being able to recover after a flop the way male directors do that turned light bulbs on over our heads: "These dudes, man," Leslye Headland, who "wants to be a Martin Scorsese" — and not

just a female version — told Dowd. "Spielberg and Casavetes and Woody Allen have all made some unwatchable movies. But it's Elaine May and *Ishtar* you remember. It's not Elaine May's fault. Poor Elaine."

Although post-*Ishtar* she's written some superb scripts, including *Primary Colours* and *The Birdcage*, May hasn't directed a movie since.

"If all of the people who hate *Ishtar* had seen it," May said in 2006, "I would be a rich woman today."

So, that's how we got to *Ishtar*, which we'd never seen. And guess what? We loved it. (Martin Scorsese does, too.) The film, about two hilariously talentless lounge singers who perform in Morocco and get involved in a plot to overthrow the government in the fictional neighbouring country of *Ishtar*, was far funnier than our controversial dinner.

I said I'd bring home falafel. Simon said falafel isn't Moroccan. I said no kidding. But *Ishtar* isn't even a real place so we can eat whatever we want. Just as long as we tip our hats to Elaine May.

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's *The Social*.

FILM BRIEF

Rock the Kasbah year's biggest box-office bomb

According to Forbes, the comedy vehicle *Rock The Kasbah* starring the usually hugely bankable Bill Murray only recouped 19.13 per cent of its costs at the cinema, making it 2015's biggest box-office disappointment.

The annual list yet again shows that even with the hottest of Hollywood stars in leading roles, there is no guarantee of success.

Actors making this year's list include Bradley Cooper (*Aloha*), Johnny Depp (*Mortdecai*), George Clooney (*Tomorrowland*), Channing Tatum (*Jupiter Ascending*), and Zac Efron (*We Are Your Friends*).

The second biggest flop of the year is Sean Penn vehicle *The Gunman* which he co-wrote and co-produced. Michael Mann-directed *Blackhat* starring Chris Hemsworth is in third place, while Vince Vaughn comedy *Unfinished Business* is in fourth and Jem and the Holograms is in fifth place.

The full list can be found at Forbes. AFP

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Scaredy-dino echoes director's own fears

PETER SOHN

Young dino finds out what he's made, as the director did

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada



When Peter Sohn joined Pixar Studios 15 years ago as a story artist on *Finding Nemo*, he would've never dreamed that he'd someday be directing his very own movie. Even now, with his debut family epic *The Good Dinosaur*, he's quick to give credit to the animation empire.

"People at Pixar — they really support you," said Sohn in Toronto about his quick rise through various departments at the animation house. "I remember working in L.A. and when you were done with a project, you were laid off. That's not the case at Pixar — once you're done with a project, you're able to move to another project (and) it becomes more about doing



The Good Dinosaur marks Pixar artist Peter Sohn's directorial debut. CONTRIBUTED

your best."

For Sohn, his finest work included important contributions to such box-office hits as *The Incredibles* and *Monsters University* — not to mention lending voice work to supporting characters in such films as Oscar-winner *Ratatouille*.

"In the story department, you're always pitching your scenes so you're doing the voices," admitted Sohn about how he stumbled into voice work as well as an animation. "It does give you a lot of learning too (for) directing other people."

The truth is, *The Good Dino-*

saur relies heavily on Sohn's personal experiences as well as his professional success. Set within the premise that dinosaurs never went extinct, Sohn's feature follows the Jurassic journey of a stray *Apatosaurus* trying to overcome his fears while trekking home with a young Neanderthal

amigo.

"It didn't set out to be a parallel but it became that," admitted Sohn. Like most good fantasy, the film's themes echo real life. After all, Arlo the *Apatosaurus*'s challenge to find out what he's really made of mirrors Sohn's struggles with his own self-confidence

EYES HAVE IT

It's all in the pupils

Part of Pixar's success has been by anthropomorphizing animals in their animated hits. As Sohn explains, much of that is in humanizing the eyes.

"(We) have charts on eyes and how to break down an eyebrow, pupil size, placement of pupil," said the longtime Pixar and Disney filmmaker. "I can't tell you how much you study the eyes and find gestures of thoughtfulness."

as a young Korean immigrant artist in America.

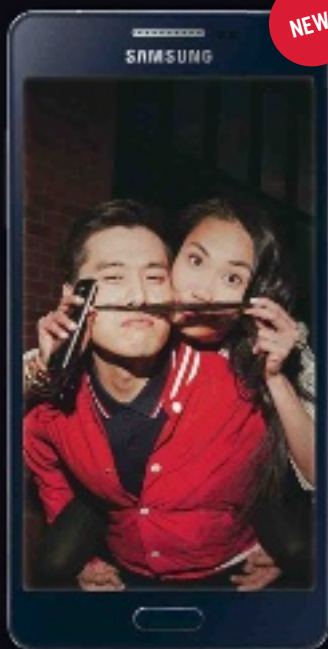
"When fear stops me from doing what I need to do; when I feel like I'm not worth anything (and) I'm trying to find a way to get through it," explained Sohn. "It was always the love of movies and the love of my family and people around me — there was always that answer. What a simple concept — you can't get rid of fear but you can always get through it."



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The communist who didn't name names

NEW FILM

Bryan Cranston talks Dalton Trumbo's moral stance

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada



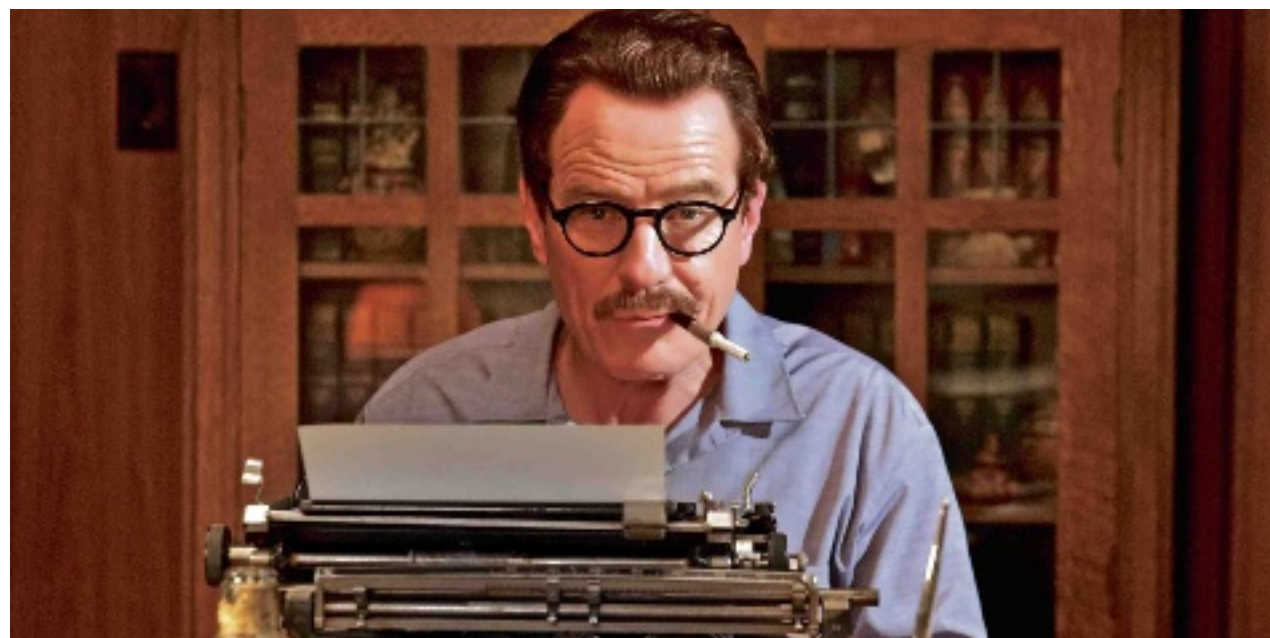
For a brief time Dalton Trumbo was the highest paid writer in Hollywood, which also meant he was the highest paid writer in the world.

He was a family man, a wealthy and proud American communist whose career was sidelined by The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals.

A new film called *Trumbo*, starring *Breaking Bad*'s Bryan Cranston, tells the story of how the Academy Award winning screenwriter was reduced to penning scripts for b-movies like *The Alien* and *The Farm Girl*.

"Under the first amendment you have the right to free speech and Trumbo felt very strongly about that," says Cranston.

"He thought it was un-Amer-



Bryan Cranston plays blacklisted Hollywood writer Dalton Trumbo in *Trumbo*, opening this weekend. CONTRIBUTED

ican and unconstitutional for the House Un-American Activities Committee to hold these hearings and demand under threat of contempt of Congress that people answer these questions.

The questions were things like: Are you now or have you

ever been a member of the Communist Party? And, if so, to save yourself, renounce it now and tell us who else was a member.

The committee wanted these people to give names so they could go after more people.

"It's fundamentally wrong and he felt that was wrong and

unconstitutional to ask that question," says Cranston of Trumbo's reaction.

Trumbo didn't name names and paid a heavy price, losing his lofty Hollywood perch and almost his family.

"In a way I relate to Trumbo," says Cranston, but admits he's

not sure what he would do if his career was ever placed in a similar kind of jeopardy.

"What would you do if they subpoenaed you and said, 'We want to know who else likes baseball? Who is it?' Would you point the finger at other people who found enjoyment out of

playing baseball?

"Of course I would love to think I would be honourable and not do it, but I have to be honest and say, that's a hypothetical. I think I would be resistant to that pressure and perhaps even pay the price, but do I know for sure? No.

"I don't know for a certainty because I'm not faced with it."

After wrapping his five-season career-making run as *Breaking Bad*'s Walter White, Cranston has kept busy, winning a Tony Award for playing Lyndon B. Johnson on Broadway in *All the Way* and has eight films in various stages of completion. He made time for Trumbo because "the story itself is brilliant and that is the first thing I look for," but admits he's gotten picky about the parts he plays.

"I don't want to now take a job for money. I take jobs because I'm attracted to them by the creative element or because it challenges me in some way and my agents are incentivized to work out the best deal they can.

"I don't want to portray this idea that I'm just about the art. I've been poor and I've been rich and rich is better."

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New Real Estate Bonanza

Right now while you are reading this, hedge funds are buying U.S. property in mass. Foreign nationals are loading up on houses as fast as they can. Some savvy individuals are snapping up housing in the U.S. like never before.

In October, *Reuters* reported private investment firm Starwood Capital Group got in the game. They purchased 23,262 mid-rise and garden-style apartments for a whopping \$5.37 billion. Other hedge funds are buying entire subdivisions under construction.

The Chinese are the number one overseas investors of U.S. real estate. Often they will buy 10 condos at once, sight unseen.

Does all this investment activity show the U.S. headed for another property bubble? The answer is no.

Demographics are driving demand for rental property to heights unseen in American history. *Bloomberg Business* says rents are only going higher.

The Millennials saddled with student debt, are choosing to rent. Others want to live in cities and avoid long commutes home ownership often demands.

One of the fastest growing demographic segments in the U.S. is those over age 65. Their downsizing activity is flooding the market with discounted property.

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Warren Buffet told CNBC he would buy a couple hundred thousand single family homes if he could.

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Critics embrace Nixon's new role



Nixon plays a terminally-ill mother in the upcoming drama *James White*. CONTRIBUTED

JAMES WHITE

Stepping out of SATC shadow, Nixon drawing Oscar buzz

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada



It's been over a decade since *Sex and the City* ended its run on HBO and while the hit

television series' stars have remained shrouded in the shadow of its success, Cynthia Nixon is finally stepping into the spotlight.

Starring in a forthcoming biopic about poet Emily Dickinson and recurring as a ther-

apist in the upcoming season of Showtime's hit drama *The Affair*, the SATC actress is finally breaking out from being only recognized as Miranda Hobbes.

"It was a great time in just about every way," recalled Nixon recently of the classic series. "Least of which was how deliciously the scripts were written and all the fun things you got to do. Its fun to have an ensemble like that (when) you mesh so well."

However, once the series ended, the twice-Emmy winning star found herself trying to shake the tyranny of typecasting.

Instead of simply taking easy money because producers "think you should be doing romantic parts," Nixon chose to be cautiously selective — a choice that's finally paying off.

"I'll be 50 next year and the thing about getting older is there are fewer parts but the good news is, if you can get them, they're really interest-

MOVIES

Cynthia Nixon's early career role model

Nixon may have started acting as a kid, but she always focused on the field for her career.

As such, one of her idols became actress (and Gwyneth Paltrow's mother) Blythe Danner after Nixon worked with her on stage.

"I was so impressed with not only her unbelievable skill, beauty and charm but what a rich, full life she had and how devoted she was to her kids," said Nixon. "She was a big role model for me."

ing," said Nixon.

Specifically, she cites her latest portrayal as a terminally-ill mother dealing with a slouch son in the award-winning drama, *James White* — a

role that's even drawing early Oscar buzz.

"When (producers) make movies about people dying of diseases, a common trap is that they set up a very two-dimensional character and then it's all about the disease," said Nixon, humbly crediting her positive reviews to filmmaker Josh Mond.

"People are very moved by the story (and) what's wonderful is how personally it hits people."

But *James White* also struck Nixon intimately. Just before shooting the film, her own mother succumbed to cancer — a somber circumstance that only informed and emboldened her even more to the character.

"I would've taken the part regardless of the situation but because of my situation, I was better equipped to do it," admitted Nixon.

"So even though it was of course sad at times, I think making the movie made me feel closer to my mother."

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ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics: **81%** **Audience:** **81%**

DRAMA

Trumbo

Director: Jay Roach
Starring: Bryan Cranston, Alan Tudyk

In 1947, Dalton Trumbo was Hollywood's top screenwriter until he and other artists were jailed and blacklisted for their political beliefs. The film recounts how Dalton used words and wit to win two Academy Awards and expose the absurdity and injustice under the blacklist.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics: **73%** **Audience:** **76%**


DRAMA

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ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics: **73%** **Audience:** **76%**

DRAMA/ACTION

The Hunger Games - Mockingjay 2

Director: Francis Lawrence
Starring: Jennifer Lawrence, Julianne Moore

With the nation of Panem in a full-scale war, Katniss confronts President Snow in the final showdown. Teamed with a group of other fighters, Katniss goes off on a mission to liberate the citizens of Panem.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics: **71%** **Audience:** **75%**

DRAMA

Victor Frankenstein

Director: Paul McGuigan
Starring: James McAvoy, Daniel Radcliffe

James McAvoy and Daniel Radcliffe star in a twist on a legendary tale. Radical scientist Victor Frankenstein and his protégé Igor Strausman share a vision of aiding humanity.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics: **22%** **Audience:** **54%**


ART HOUSE

Legend

Director: Brian Helgeland
Starring: Tom Hardy, Emily Browning

The true story of the rise and fall of London's most notorious gangsters, Reggie and Ronnie Kray, who captivated the public and once upon a time lorded over a criminal empire.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE

Critics: **59%** **Audience:** **74%**



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IT'S THE FINAL COUNTDOWN METRO RANKS ROCKY

The Rocky series gets a semi-spinoff with Creed. And for the first time, Sylvester Stallone's storied underdog isn't the centrepiece. This one follows Apollo Creed's son, Adonis, with Rocky as his mentor. So how does it stack up to the others? Here's our four favourite Rocky films. **MATT PRIGGE/METRO NEW YORK**



1 Rocky (1976)

Along with Jaws the year prior and Star Wars the year after, the first Rocky is often credited with helping break the gritty, downer streak that had come to somewhat (if by no means entirely) dominate Hollywood in the '70s. But it's still pretty downer and gritty, and it doesn't end with our palooka pugilist even winning. What its many, many knockoffs get wrong is that it's not just about the melodrama and a cheer-able close. Sylvester Stallone's Rocky really has his hills and valleys before he hits the mountaintop. Also often neglected: Stallone's performance, which is so lived-in, so lively, so genuinely lovable that it's easy to take for granted.

2 Creed (2015)

The first movie to feature Stallone's Rocky without being written (and in four cases, directed) by Stallone, Creed is technically fan-fiction, courtesy Fruitvale Station maker Ryan Coogler. But it balances honouring the classics with being its own thing, feeling fresh even when it's pounding out a classic training montage or a big climactic bout. Michael B. Jordan's Adonis — the aspiring boxer son of dead-and-gone Rocky rival-turned-bud Apollo Creed — may be the lead, but Rocky doesn't just pass the torch. Even after four decades, Stallone is able to find new notes inside a character who has aged from Rocky from the block to a superstar, back to a guy who's back on the block, mourning the many who've passed on.



3 Rocky III (1982)

The sequels — before the genuinely melancholic revival Rocky Balboa in 2005 — turned increasingly silly and outsized to match a star who himself turned silly and outsized. The third is at least deeply entertaining, no less because it has a villain — Mr. T's Clubber Lang — whose personality is so big and charismatic he threatens to hijack the entire franchise. At least Stallone the director had evolved. He was among the first in Hollywood to adopt a punchier MTV esthetic to mainstream filmmaking (and thus made the movies shorter by about 20 minutes).



4 Rocky Balboa (2006)

The '90s were spotty for Stallone, and the first half of the '00s were abysmal, the star bottoming out with DTV fare like Avenging Angelo and the disastrous (and disastrously titled) Eye See You. You could cynically say he was just being cynical when he dusted Rocky off (and then Rambo, too), but he took the return seriously, in part because he wanted to give a noble send-off to a character who'd gone out like a chump in the little-loved Rocky V. Balboa is in many ways stubborn: at times sleepy and old-fashioned, even spotty, but it's also deeply felt.

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Nat Geo Wild about couchsurfing safari

TV SPECIAL

Settle into your easy chair for a live tour of game reserves

As a chaser to the Thanksgiving feast and football, consider heading out on an African safari.

There's strictly armchair travel involved for Nat Geo Wild's live telecasts from Sabi Sands, a private game reserve in South Africa's Kruger National Park that's likely to dazzle even from a distance.

The no-sweat safaris, which begin Friday night, will offer "a real-time experience transporting viewers to a place they all want to go but may not have the opportunity," said Geoff Daniels, head of Nat Geo Wild.

"That we can beam audiences half a world away into the African bush is magical and stunning," said Daniels.

It's hard to fault his enthusiasm. Painstaking planning, skilful use of technology and helpful time zones will combine to bring one of Africa's largest game reserves, home to lions, leopards, elephants and more, to U.S. viewers.

Safaris typically are conducted at dawn, when the sun is coming up and animals are most active, and at dusk, Daniels said, making the telecasts relatively easy to schedule.

The excursions will air 11



A cheetah during the Big Cat Games in Busch Gardens Tampa. NAT GEO WILD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

p.m. to midnight EST Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with two-hour daytime specials at 9 a.m. EST daily from Saturday to Friday, Dec. 4.

"It's 100 per cent live," Daniels said. "We've got two safari vehicles going into the bush with microwave transmitters and cameras placed on the back of the jeeps."

The camera deployment will allow viewers to see everything they would if physically in the reserve, and in "full-blown HD" to boot, Daniels said. Drones

will add overhead camera angles to add "a sense of the scale, scope and of action ... from a different perspective."

There's an online component as well, including the opportunity to ask questions via Twitter of the safari guides, who will respond during the telecasts, and an online bingo game with an actual safari as the prize.

Nat Geo, with producing partner Wild Earth, has been showing live safaris online for the past year and fine-tuning the process, Daniels said.

said by phone from Namibia, which borders South Africa. "We're opening up beautiful areas to potentially millions of people, and those people will form bonds with the environment because they're experiencing it in such a real way."

While Daniels calls the safaris the cherry on top of Big Cat Week, there are other notable programs.

The annual event kicks off with *Cougars Undercover*, 9 p.m. Friday, which showcases the Teton Cougar Project in Wyoming, a study by the wild cats conservation group Panthera.

As with the safaris, technology is key to *Cougars Undercover*. Sophisticated cameras provide access to the cats in a "non-invasive way," Daniels

said, following two mountain lion moms and

their cubs and documenting the cougar population's challenges.

Other Big Cat Week programs include *The Lakeshore Killers*, 9 p.m. EST Saturday, about a trio of male African lions coming of age, and *The Ultimate Predator*, 10 p.m. EST Sunday, a look at who rules among the dozens of cat species.

Nat Geo Wild's goal is to entertain and enlighten, Daniels said.

"It's our mission to deliver things like this (safari) experience ... and transport people into areas we really want them to care about," he said. "We're trying to get people to fall in love with animals and do a better job of taking care of them around the world." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



They've attracted an enthusiastic following that includes shutterbugs taking photos of animals and sharing on social media.

Pieter Pretorius, a veteran guide who's handled the online safaris, says he's delighted with the expansion to TV.

"It's hugely exciting," he

A hyena family in a South African game reserve.

PIETER PRETORIUS

PUBLIC SPECTACLES

A history of Grey Cup halftime shows from Luba to Fall Out Boy

Alan Cross
For Metro Canada



Sunday marks the 103rd edition of what some still call The Great

National Drunk. And while the Grey Cup will always be dwarfed by the Super Bowl, we Canadians should remember that our game was into proper halftime spectacles before the NFL.



Justin Bieber (2012)



Black Eyed Peas (2005)

the Prairies in November wasn't such a bad idea.

From then on, the Grey Cup halftime show became a much bigger priority. (There were a few duds like 1999's CFL Cheerleader Dance Routines, but never mind.)

In Toronto in 1992, it was Celine Dion. Vancouver brought in Tom Cochrane in 1994. The Guess Who entertained at McMahon Stadium in Calgary in 2000. Two years later in Edmonton, it was Shania Twain, followed by Bryan Adams and Sam Roberts (Regina, 2003) and the Tragically Hip (Ottawa, 2004).

Starting in 2005, organizers became open to hiring international acts, a controversial move given that the Grey Cup is supposed to be a quintessentially Canadian experience, but the Black Eyed Peas (Vancouver) did give the game an enhanced sense of prestige, as did Lenny Kravitz's performance in Toronto in 2007.

After that the pendulum swung back towards Canadian

performers: Theory of a Deadman, Suzie McNeil and Andree Walters (2008), Blue Rodeo (2009) and Bachman & Turner (2010), Nickelback (2011), Justin Bieber, Carly Ray Jepson, Marianas Trench and, um, Gordon Lightfoot (2012) and Hedley (2013).

Now we seem to be into an international cycle again. Imagine Dragons brought down the house in B.C. last year. And despite the challenges of booking an international band on American Thanksgiving Weekend, Fall Out Boy will be at Investors Field in Winnipeg this Sunday.

ONE OTHER THING
The NFL doesn't pay its halftime performers a fee, saying that the exposure they get is enough. The CFL cuts a cheque every time.

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Where Memories Matter

A taste of the real Jamaica

SOUTH COAST
Go off the beaten track to explore the island's culinary side

Melissa Dunne
 For Metro Canada



When most Canadians jet off to Jamaica they go straight from the airport to behind the gates of an all-inclusive resort. Once behind the gates, people are usually served bad drinks with little umbrellas in them, reheated versions of the same food you can get back home and truly terrible stale coffee in the morning when you're nursing the hangover from all the umbrella drinks you drank the day before.

Aim higher. If you're going to stay behind the resort gates you might as well stay home and sip on cheap rum in your basement while watching the latest hockey game. Instead of heading to the crowded, kitschy resorts in Montego Bay and Kingston, get a taste of the real Jamaica by heading off the beaten (tourist) track. Jake's Hotel in Treasure Beach, where staff can organize off-site adventures with local guides accompanying you, is a great option for those wanting to safely explore the Caribbean island.

Jake's is a bumpy two-and-a-half hours' drive from Sangster's International Airport in Montego Bay. It's well worth the



The salt-water pool at Jake's Hotel, where the water is pumped in straight from the bay. PHOTOS COURTESY MARY APESOS/FINN PARTNERS

commute. Contact the hotel to arrange a driver, for \$134 US, one way, for up to a group of four. The boutique hotel is actually a collection of colourful cottages, ranging from small rooms with garden views starting at about \$135 US (all prices not inclusive of taxes and service fees, for a minimum five-night stay) to a luxury villa with ocean views from \$1,110 US per night during the high season (from Dec. 15 to April 15).

Eat and drink local
 Eat al fresco at Jake's with the sound of the salt-water crashing



A lobster feast courtesy of One Love Boat Tours with captain Joseph Brown.



A traditional Jamaican breakfast at Jake's Hotel with fresh, locally grown ingredients.

against the rocks in the back-ground. The menu changes constantly, as it features local produce and seafood when it's in season. Be sure to try Jake's take on ackee and saltfish, Jamaica's national dish, for breakfast and pair it with a cup of famous Blue Mountain coffee.

To really get a sense of the St. Elizabeth Parish make sure to time your visit for the once-monthly farm-to-table event at Dool's Farm. The sunset dinner with the local farmer available to answer any questions is well worth the \$95 US, plus taxes and tips. Most people in the rural, relaxed parish will gladly talk your ear off, so don't be shy to ask about the provenance and importance of their local food and drink.

The warm staff at Jake's can also help set up a boat tour, including a private feast with freshly caught lobster on a secluded beach, followed by a visit to Pelican Bar. The picturesque bar is actually a shack in the middle of the sea where you'll likely sip on a few Red Stripe beers and Appleton Estate rums mixed with ginger beer.

Rum is in the running to become the next bourbon, so there's no better place to get educated about the good stuff than by taking a day trip to partake in the Appleton Estate Rum Tour.

Once you've ventured beyond the resort gates in Jamaica you'll wonder why you stayed behind them for so long in the first place.

The writer was a guest of Jamaica Tourist Board, which did not review nor approve the story.

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Don't let the loonie clip your travel wings

ON THE MOVE

Look at other sun spots when the dollar is weak

Loren Christie
For Metro Canada



The falling loonie has not only put a strain on the wallets of travellers heading to the United States but on sun seekers faced with rising prices from tour operators who do their contracting in U.S. dollars. But there are ways you can still take a winter holiday without breaking the bank.

Book now

Canadian travel companies have jumped on board the Cyber Monday shopping craze, making early next week the time to find some great deals. Starting Monday, Cheapflights.ca's 12 Days of Travel will feature one deal per day. These daily deals will cover budgets for every level and range from savings on Caribbean cruises, to dis-

counted airfares on airlines like WestJet and Air Canada, to major discounts on hotel stays in Cuba and Dominican Republic. Transat.ca is celebrating Cyber Monday with a one-day auction on Twitter to benefit SOS Children's Villages. Twenty lots comprising sun packages to destinations like Mexico, Curacao and St. Maarten and roundtrip flights to Europe from 11 cities will be up for grabs.

Consider off-season travel

According to a recent Travelzoo.ca survey more Canadians (73 per cent) are opting for off-season vacations to save on costs. Although it may mean for a longer winter, beach bums should head south after Easter when prices start to drop. Travelling to Europe in the off-season is a great alternative for Canadians. Not only is the

euro experiencing its own decline but there are deals to be had during the winter months. As an added bonus Canadians travelling to the "old world" in winter will experience smaller crowds than during the summer.

Seek out alternative (and better value) destinations

Skip the all-inclusive to Jamaica and head to spots in Central and South America like Panama and Ecuador, which are growing in popularity. According to online travel company FlightHub, Asia has seen a spike in popularity this winter with destinations like the Philippines and Thailand taking over the top ranking from the typical favourites Orlando and Las Vegas. Yes the flights to Asia are not cheap, but once you are on the ground you will get a much better bang for your Canadian buck.

Compare exchange rates

Consider getting local currency of the country you are travelling in versus bringing U.S. cash. It likely will yield you a better rate. Most major airports in the world have a bank machine making access to local currency easy when you first land.



Travelling to Europe in the off-season is a great alternative for Canadians.



Temper the effects of a low loonie by taking advantage of Cyber Monday deals. ISTOCK

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'Rocky' effect put Philly on world map

PENNSYLVANIA

Plenty of love for movie saga in resurgent city

It is a classic slice of pop history: Sylvester Stallone — a.k.a. "Rocky" — jogging up the steps of the art museum in Philadelphia.

For four decades, the boxing saga whose latest chapter hit U.S. screens Wednesday, helped put Philly on the map.

The 72 "Rocky Steps" — as they are known — are an irresistible draw to tourists who come to mimic the iconic scene from the Oscar-winning 1976 movie about an aspirational boxer named Rocky Balboa.

"The Rocky movie series has been an incredible part of the history and the legacy of the city Philadelphia," Mayor Michael Nutter told AFP. "I mean this has been going on for 30 years now. It's a part of us and we are a part of it."

At the foot of the famed steps towers a 10-foot bronze statue of Rocky, commissioned by the saga's star and creator Stallone for Rocky III and donated to the city after the shoot.

On a crisp fall day, Agga Dharma, a Buddhist monk newly arrived from Myanmar, waits in turn with a dozen tourists to snap a selfie beside it. Yes, he says, Rocky is a phenomenon in his native Burma too.

The statue is Philly's most asked-about landmark behind the Liberty Bell, a symbol of the birth of the United States, says Anne McGuigan, a volunteer at the tourist office.

Visitors can pick up Rocky-themed maps guiding them to the steps and statue, but also a dozen locations from the Italian market, home to Esposito's Butcher shop, to Pat's King of Steaks — the Philly cheesesteak sandwich spot — or the Penn's landing waterfront.

"The Rocky movie series," says Nutter, "put Philadelphia on the international map. For that, we're very proud and very grateful."

Now Creed is hitting screens just in time for U.S. Thanksgiving. The saga's seventh instalment sees Stallone return as the veteran Balboa, called out of retirement to mentor the son of a late friend and boxing rival.

Restored pride
Rocky's popularity is not uni-

versal in Philly. Some here see the franchise, already spun out across five sequels and a Broadway musical, as having run its course long ago.

"Some people like it, some people don't," said Jordan Morinich, an employee at Esposito's, of the phenomenon. "All the shops used to have a picture of him inside. We never had one. I don't think it changes anything for business."

The Rocky statue was originally located at the top of the famous steps, but had to be moved after locals complained it was inappropriate outside a museum.

But in Pennsylvania's largest city, Rocky still gets a lot of love.

"When it first came out, it restored pride to the city," said Vince Giaccobi, who grew up in Philadelphia. "In the '70s and '80s, the city wasn't where it needed to be," he said, referring to its reputation as a blue-collar, struggling town.

These days, it is a city on the

move, something of a boom town. Largely neglected for decades, its downtown has been revitalized, and bristles with new restaurants, bars and construction projects.

Poverty remains a concern, with a citywide level among the 10 highest in the country. But economic growth is solid.

"It's changed a lot. Now it's more culturally oriented. I think it's for the better," Giaccobi said.

Craig Schelter, executive director at the city's Development Workshop, which acts as a bridge between government and the private sector, says tax benefits in 1997 were critical to the downtown rebirth.

Developers began investing massively and by 2008, cable giant Comcast was moving into its new headquarters there. Big growth at the city's big three universities — Penn, Drexel and Temple — also has been a driving factor, according to Schelter. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



The 10-foot Rocky Balboa statue in front of the Museum of Art in Philadelphia. THOMAS URBAIN/AFP

“Every time Rocky comes out, I get 50 kids in the gym.... With this opening up, it's going to be packed again.” Frank Kubach, whose Front Street Gym was used to shoot Creed

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Secret Santa: gifts for a stranger

GIVING GUIDANCE

Make your gift a memorable one, no matter who you're buying for

Astrid Van Den Broek

You've pulled Sandra's name from payroll for the office Secret Santa gift exchange. Who's Sandra again? And what do you get this total stranger?

“

A gag gift might be perfect for the family but could be disastrous at work.

Marie Anakee Miczak, the New York-based blogger behind gavethat.com

Whether you loathe or love a Secret Santa exchange, there are ways to make your gift a memorable one. (No need to resort to gift cards!)

Here's what you can do.

CONSIDER YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Is this an office Secret Santa? A church? A family gathering? “A gag gift might be perfect for the family but could be disastrous at work,” notes Marie Anakee Miczak, the New York-based blogger behind gavethat.com. If you do opt for a gift card, make it one of the more unique ones rather than just a usual coffee card.

“They can be ones for fun experiences or an unexpected treat such as a movie out with friends,” Miczak adds.

THINK ABOUT YOURSELF

As in...what types of gifts do you like to receive but never get?

“If you do that, even if you don't know them well, it's a safe bet that the recipient doesn't already have it — so think about something luxe such as cash-

mere socks, a high-end candle or letter press coasters,” says Lindsay Roberts Schey, founder of the blog TheGiftInsider.com.

GO EDIBLE

Who doesn't like to eat? “On-trend edibles are always a great option,” says Roberts Schey. “So macaroons, hot chocolate stirrers and gourmet popcorn are a hit this year.”

“Gifts that are great are something that you love — like a favourite organic tea or honey or favourite handmade local chocolate,” says Lisa Pozin, the Vancouver-based owner of Giving Gifts.

DOS...

If you know the person and their interests, start there says Roberts Schey.

“So for a yoga lover, you could try an insulated water bottle and an athletic headband. Or for a coffee drinker, a calligraphy mug,” Roberts Schey also gives the thumbs up to give holiday-related items such as candles, ornaments and home decor items.

...AND DON'TS!

However avoid buying clothes or items people have to wear daily. “If they're a co-worker or close friend and they don't love the item, you don't want them feeling guilty every day they don't wear it around you.”

And if you don't know the person well, opt for a more gender neutral low-key

item. “Don't buy something that is over-the-top or a crazy colour or way out there,” says Pozin.

“Try to be modest and neutral with your gift so that it really will appeal to anyone that gets it, not just the person that you think might get it.”

Also, Roberts Schey adds, don't go over the price limit. “It just makes people feel uncomfortable and takes away all the fun.”

And don't regift! While regifting is a little more acceptable these days, you're taking chances doing it in the Secret Santa office pool.

“If you have bad luck, the person that gave it to you will notice and you'll be embarrassed for the next year,” says Pozin.



NEED MORE IDEAS FOR YOUR SECRET SANTA?

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2 The Original Chicken Bones 300g Gift Box \$10, available at major retailers including Loblaws, Walmart and Shopper's Drug Mart.

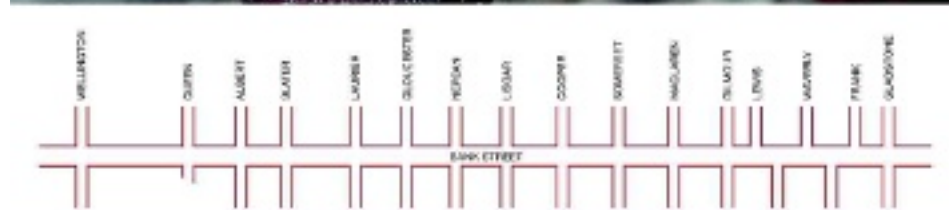
3 Anna Karenina: A Colouring Book Love Story, \$16, and Double-Sided Colouring Pen-

cils, \$12.50, Indigo, chapters.indigo.ca.

4 Canadiana Cookie Cutters, \$8.47, Walmart.

5 Circus Finger Puppets, \$19.50, Indigo, chapters.indigo.ca.

6 Bison Bracelet, \$14, Sporting Life, sportinglife.ca.



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Liverpool qualified for the last 32 of the Europa League thanks to a Christian Benteke goal, while Celtic is knocked out by Ajax 2-1

Hudec's home-snow events threatened by knee trouble

SKIING WORLD CUP

Calgary hero's downhill in doubt, super-G is just a 'maybe'

After eight knee surgeries, Jan Hudec is accustomed to skiing in pain. It takes a certain kind of pain to force him out of a race, especially on home snow in Lake Louise.

But Hudec is unlikely to race the season-opening World Cup men's downhill Saturday. The Calgarian withdrew from a second straight training run Thursday. Stepping into the start hut for Sunday's shorter super-G is a "maybe" at best.

"At this point the downhill is not out, but it's likely out, which gives me two more days to rest for the super-G," Hudec said Thursday.

"Will it be worth it to take a major risk on Sunday just because it's Lake Louise and it's at home and I like the hill? Probably not, but that's a bridge I'll cross when I get there."

Norway's Kjetil Jansrud, who swept the downhill and super-G a year ago, was fastest in Thursday's training after posting the second-fastest time the previous day. Erik Guay of Mont-Tremblant, Que., was the top Canadian in sixth.

A third and final training run is scheduled for Friday at the Al-



Canada's Jan Hudec says it may not be worth the 'major risk' to ski at Lake Louise but that he will play it by ear. EZRA SHAW/GETTY IMAGES

berta ski resort west of Calgary.

Hudec, 34, has minimal cartilage in his right knee after a seventh surgery on it in January. He's had one surgery on his left knee. While training with the Canadian men at Nakiska Ski Resort last week, Hudec says the bones in that

knee "squished" together. The Olympic bronze medallist in super-G in 2014 rode the chairlift up the mountain Thursday intending to get a training run

in, but pulled the plug.

"I've skied with pain before so I thought better living through pharmaceuticals would make it all better and it just didn't today," Hudec said. "Not enough to give me the confidence to go down the course. I don't care about pain.

More than the pain, it needs to feel safe for me to go down the mountain at 110 per cent. There's so much pain that it would basically put me in a defensive position."

Hudec won the downhill in Lake Louise in 2007. Canada's lone home stop on the World Cup downhill circuit is special to him because of the support the host team gets.

"All the hoopla around it, all the media, it's such a great place to start the season," Hudec said. "It's a totally different vibe here.

"In Beaver Creek, no one would notice if I don't start except for a few people. Here it's like, insert sad carnival music, wha, wha, wha."

In addition to the usual motivations racing at home, Hudec's plan this weekend was to race with a helmet designed for him by 10-year-old Dylan Kwan.

The helmet, featuring a fierce panda bear, fetched a bid of \$15,000 for pediatric liver research at a fundraiser. Kwan, who has a liver condition called biliary atresia, will travel to Lake Louise to watch Hudec race. "I think I can make it up to Dylan in other ways," Hudec said. "It'll give me time to hang out with him and actually spend time with him in the finish and critique all the racers together.

"Maybe get the athletes as they come through to sign the helmet and make it a little more special for him."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

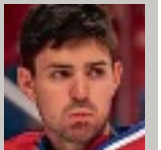
NHL IN BRIEF

Injury will keep Habs' Price out for at least a week

Montreal Canadiens goaltender Carey Price will miss at least a week due to a nagging lower-body injury.

Price played the first 40 minutes in a 5-1 victory over the New York Rangers on Wednesday night but did not return for the third period. Head coach Michel Therrien said Thursday that Price has been put on the injured list.

On Wednesday night, the coach said the lower-body injury was the same one that kept Price — the league's No.1 goalie — out for nine games earlier this season. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Carey Price
GETTY IMAGES

Oilers' Yakupov out for 4-6 weeks with ankle sprain

Edmonton Oilers forward Nail Yakupov is expected to miss two to four weeks after spraining his left ankle in a 4-1 loss to the Carolina Hurricanes on Wednesday.

He was knocked down when linesman Matt MacPherson lost his balance and fell backwards after a faceoff early in the second period. Yakupov had to be helped off the ice.

"It could've been worse based on what happened," Oilers coach Todd McLellan said Thursday. Yakupov had picked up his 100th career point earlier in the game.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

PAN AM GAMES

Medal upgrades for Canada after Peru's doping disqualifications



Rachel Hannah now has a Pan Am Games bronze medal for the women's marathon but was disappointed she couldn't take to the podium on the day. INGE JOHNSON/CANADIAN RUNNING SERIES

Canadian swimmer Zack Chetrat will have his Pan Am medal upgraded to silver while teammate Alec Page and distance runner Rachel Hannah will receive bronze medals after a pair of Peruvian athletes were disqualified due to doping infractions.

The Canadian Olympic Committee was informed of the redistribution of medals by the Pan American Sports Organization after the conclusion of the antidoping process, the COC said Thursday in a release.

Hannah gets the third-place result in the women's marathon.

"You think about how, in the moment, it would have been really special to have been up there on that stage (in the medal ceremony), so it is disappointing," Hannah said. "But it's a really nice surprise after the fact."

Chetrat moves into second place in the men's 200-metre butterfly while Page takes third in the same event.

Gladys Tejeda originally won marathon gold in two hours 33.03 seconds. She

was stripped of the result due to a failed doping test administered during the Games, Athletics Canada said in a release. Specifics on the infraction weren't immediately available.

Adrianna Da Silva of Brazil (2:35.40) will be upgraded to gold and American Lindsay Flanagan (2:36.30) will move up to silver. Hannah



Zack Chetrat now has a silver instead of bronze.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

(2:41.06) will receive her bronze medal on Saturday in Kingston, Ont., during a special ceremony at the Canadian cross-country championships. Swimmer Mauricio Fiol was the other disqualified athlete, a Swimming Canada spokesman said. He tested positive for the banned steroid stanozolol and was suspended from the Peruvian team on July 17.

Page will receive his medal Friday at the Saanich Commonwealth Place pool in Victoria. Plans for Chetrat's ceremony have not yet been finalized.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



BURRIS BACK FOR MORE Redblacks quarterback Henry Burris poses with the Grey Cup during the team breakfast in Winnipeg on Thursday. The CFL veteran will look to win the trophy for the third time on Sunday. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Redblacks D full of swagger

103RD GREY CUP

Ottawa led CFL in sacks, among other categories

The fledgling Redblacks have wasted little time branding their defence.

Ottawa's defensive linemen and linebackers are dubbed Capital Punishment. The defensive secondary is known as D Block.

"There is definitely the same swagger but we go about things a little bit differently than D Block does," explained six-foot-

two 251-pound defensive lineman Shawn Lemon.

"Capital Punishment is a little more hands on," he added with a menacing smile.

While the Edmonton Eskimos and head coach Chris Jones, a defensive guru, have occupied most of the defensive spotlight going into Sunday's Grey Cup, the Redblacks have their own defensive chops.

Overseeing the Ottawa defence on the sidelines — with help from head coach Rick Campbell — is veteran co-ordinator Mark Nelson.

Nelson, a Nick Nolte lookalike complete with gravelly voice, is old-school football through

and through.

"An old, tough ball coach type of guy," said linebacker Damaso Munoz. "He's a great coach, man, and I'm happy to play for him."

His late father, offensive tackle Roger Nelson, is on the Eskimos Wall of Honour. He played 13 seasons for Edmonton between 1954 and 1967, was named the league's Most Outstanding Lineman in 1959 and was inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1985.

Mark Nelson made his CFL debut in 1980 with Calgary, playing six seasons as linebacker and fullback before retiring in 1987 with the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

His oldest son Kyle Nelson, one of his kids, is a long snapper for the San Francisco 49ers.

Campbell brought Mark Nelson to Ottawa. They met in 2006 and worked together in Winnipeg and Edmonton.



The Redblacks' Brandyn Thompson, middle, is in on a gang tackle of the Tiger-Cats' Andy Fantuz during the East Division final. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

"The players believe in him," said Campbell. "He was a player and gets what it's like being a player, interacts well with them."

Nelson, a native of Edmonton who won Grey Cups as an

assistant coach in 1993 with the Eskimos and 1996 with the Argonauts, says the Ottawa defence is more than the sum of its parts.

"We're slowly getting better," he said.

"We may not be the best in

everything but as a unit we really play hard — and play for each other, as corny as that sounds."

Nelson says some of his defence's statistical pluses are simply due to the good play of the offence or special teams, allowing his charges to rest.

Ottawa led the league in sacks (62) and was No. 1 against the rush (70.8 yards a game allowed). No team was stingier than the Redblacks when it came to net yards offence allowed (297.6 yards a game).

Edmonton allowed the fewest points (341) and was No. 1 in pass defence (245.2 yards a game).

Lemon is unimpressed.

"I know our defence is better than theirs," he said matter-of-factly. "I'll take the group of DBs we have over theirs any day. I'll take the group of linebackers we have any day. And I'll most definitely take our D-line over them every day."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



We may not be the best in everything but as a unit we really play hard — and play for each other, as corny as that sounds.

Redblacks defensive co-ordinator Mark Nelson

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Track record gives Eskimos the edge

Edmonton Eskimos head coach Chris Jones knows all too well how good Ottawa Redblacks veteran quarterback Henry Burris can be in a Grey Cup game.

Jones was the Calgary Stampeders' defensive co-ordinator in 2008 when they won the Grey Cup with a 22-14 victory over the Montreal Alouettes at Olympic Stadium. Burris was named the game MVP after throwing for 328 yards and a TD and rushing for a team-

high 79 yards on nine carries.

Jones and Burris find themselves back in the Grey Cup, although on opposite sides of the field.

Under Jones, the Eskimos beat the Stampeders — the defending league champions — 45-31 in the West Division final.



Burris's 93-yard TD strike to Greg Ellingson with just over a minute remaining earned Ottawa a 35-28 win over Hamilton in the East final and the city's first Grey Cup appearance since 1981.

The Eskimos have shown they can play defence against

Ottawa and have the talent in the secondary to handle the East squad's four 1,000-yard receivers. Edmonton does boast two 1,000-yard receivers but it's Reilly who makes that offence go and the Redblacks' defence will get its first look at him Sunday.

And the combination of Jones, Reilly and nine straight wins make it hard to go against the West Division champions.

Pick - Edmonton.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Eskimos quarterback Mike Reilly puts on a cape from interviewer Cabbie Richards during a media availability on Thursday. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Reilly's IQ earns praise

103RD GREY CUP

Edmonton QB blends smarts with hard-nose mentality

Mike Reilly focused as much on his grades as he did on football while growing up.

The Edmonton Eskimos quarterback graduated from Central Washington University with a 3.6 grade-point average and a mechanical engineering degree.

"I just always really liked math and numbers and puzzles and things like that and trying to figure things out," Reilly said Thursday. "My favourite course in college, honestly, was probably physics. And it was calculus for a while until I got into 300-level calculus and then I was like, 'Ah, this stuff is crazy. I don't like this anymore.'"

He even used his degree between being released by the NFL's Pittsburgh Steelers in September 2009 and being signed by the Green Bay Packers two months later.

"I worked designing H-VAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) and plumbing systems for a processing plant," Reilly said of the job near his hometown of Kennewick, Wash. "It was an experience. I like football a lot better, for sure. That's why

they tell you to get your degree, so that when you fall on hard times you've got something to fall back on."

Reilly, 30, has held down a job he loves since signing with the B.C. Lions in 2010 before being traded to Edmonton in 2013.

As his Eskimos prepare to take on the Ottawa Redblacks in Sunday's Grey Cup, coaches and teammates praise Reilly for his brains, leadership and toughness.

"Just putting things together, understanding how it works, he's very cerebral," Edmonton offensive co-ordinator Stephen McAdoo said.

"He probably doesn't get enough credit for his mind and how he handles things out on the field."

89.8

Reilly played just 10 games this regular season due to torn ligaments in his left knee. He still managed to complete 65 per cent of his passes and posted a 89.8 passer rating — both are highs for him as an Eskimo.

McAdoo, a former offensive lineman who's been around a lot of quarterbacks, put Reilly up there with Toronto's Ricky Ray and former Montreal pivot Anthony Calvillo.

"Probably the biggest thing that I get from Mike, and you can probably ask anybody around this league

that knows him or has played against him, is he's one of the toughest competitors around," he said.

"He's very tough. I love him for that, but I try to get him to understand I don't need him to be tough all the time," he added. "There's smart times to be tough. Don't take unnecessary hits." THE CANADIAN PRESS

He's very tough. I love him for that, but I try to get him to understand I don't need him to be tough all the time.

Eskimos offensive co-ordinator Stephen McAdoo

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TENNIS

Murray out to end Davis Cup drought

Andy Murray ended a 77-year wait for a British man to win the Wimbledon title and he is on the verge of snapping an even longer drought in the Davis Cup final.

The best-of-five series between Britain and Belgium starts Friday with David Goffin playing Kyle Edmund, who will be making his Davis Cup debut in the final. Murray then plays Ruben Bemelmans, who was surprisingly picked over higher-ranked Steve Darcis.

Captains can change their picks and Belgium's Johan van Herck has indicated that he could take advantage of that option. "The weekend will be long," van Herck said. "I think we took the best decision and we'll see who will play Saturday and Sunday." Murray said he was not bothered by the prospect of perhaps playing three matches in three days.

"I am happy to take as much pressure on my shoulder as needed," Murray said. "It's obviously a big opportunity for all of us. I believe that we prepared as best we can," Murray added.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Britain's Andy Murray
JULIAN FINNEY/GETTY IMAGES

Biyombo taking care of 'Bis' in Valanciunas' absence

NBA

Lowry, Casey laud centre's rim protection and attitude

When Jonas Valanciunas bent his big body in pain Friday night in Los Angeles while cradling his broken left hand, it could have spelled disaster for the Toronto Raptors.

But two games into what could be a six-week absence for Toronto's starting centre, the Raptors are faring well. Bismack Biyombo is a big reason why. Biyombo started in place of the injured Valanciunas on Wednesday and filled in admirably, recording a double-double — 11 points and 12 rebounds — in Toronto's 103-99 win over the Eastern Conference-leading Cleveland Cavaliers.

"He set the tone for us defensively," said Raptors coach Dwane Casey. "Protecting the paint, talking, being physical, being a deterrent at the rim and that was big for us. That's a good team. That



Bismack Biyombo has also proved he can chip in with points
GETTY IMAGES

team right there has got so many weapons." The Raptors signed the Congolese player to a US\$6-million, two-year deal in the off-season after Charlotte cut him loose, and he instantly made his presence felt as the most vocal player in training camp.

"Vocalness. Athleticism. Understanding where to be. Timing, he has great timing," Kyle Lowry said, when asked what Biyombo brings to the team.

Biyombo is known for his rim protecting — Casey has said it's "off the charts." Critics have claimed he can do little else. But the six-foot-nine centre came up big on the offensive end Wednesday when Lowry fed him for back-to-back uncontested dunks in the dying minutes to put the game out of reach.

"Those last couple of buckets were big for us. We needed them," Lowry said. Biyombo arrived in Toronto looking for a fresh start after an inauspicious four years with Charlotte. After leaving his home in Labumbashi for Yemen at the age of 16, he was spotted at a youth tournament there and invited to play in Spain, where he spent the



Cavaliers' LeBron James, left, is blocked at the rim by Raptors' Bismack Biyombo during second half in Toronto on Wednesday. DARREN CALABRESE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

better part of three years.

Biyombo caught the eye of Raptors coach Masai Ujiri, among other NBA general managers, at the 2011 Nike Hoop Summit — a game that pits the best American high schoolers against a team of international players. Biyombo recorded the Summit's first-ever triple-double, with 12

points, 11 boards and 10 blocks. He was drafted seventh overall by Sacramento in 2012 and then traded to Charlotte. His first two seasons were solid, but his numbers trailed off over the last two campaigns.

The Raptors also acquired DeMarre Carroll in the off-season to shore up their defence. Carroll,

who hounded LeBron James all night, said he and Biyombo have "similar mindsets."

"Bis just focuses on defence, he understands what got him in the league, he understands what his strong point is and that's being defensive, blocking shots and grabbing rebounds," Carroll said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Lions' Stafford-Johnson combo keeps Eagles grounded

Matthew Stafford and Calvin Johnson combined for one of the best games of their careers, helping the surging Detroit Lions keep the Philadelphia Eagles reeling.

Stafford tied a career high with five touchdown passes. Three of them were to Johnson, who also tied a

personal best, in a 45-14 rout of Philadelphia on Thursday. The Lions (4-7) have won three straight this season and three in a row in their annual Thanksgiving game.

The Eagles (4-7) are on a three-game losing streak. They have allowed at least 45 points in two straight games in one season for the first time in team history, according to STATS. Stafford

THURSDAY in Detroit



threw for more than 200 yards and three touchdowns without a turnover by halftime, helping the Lions lead 24-7. He finished

27 of 38 for 337 yards and threw five TDs for the fourth time in his career. Johnson had eight catches for 93 yards and three TDs, matching his career high set in 2010.

After not throwing to Johnson much early in the game, Stafford started connecting with the star receiver.

The Eagles couldn't do much about it, especially when starting cornerback Nolan Carroll left the game with a broken right ankle and was replaced by rookie Eric Rowe.

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PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada



We've updated this classic comfort food dish with a healthy topping of mashed sweet potatoes.

Ready in

Prep time: 60 minutes

Serves 8

Ingredients

- 2 lb organic lean ground beef
- 2 large cloves garlic, diced
- 3 sticks celery, diced
- 2 yellow onions, diced
- 2 large carrots, diced
- 1 1/2 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 Tbsps chili powder
- 2 tsps ground cumin
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 2 Tbsps flour
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- 1/4 cup water
- 6 drops of Worcestershire sauce
- 2 large sweet potatoes, cut into even-sized wedges
- 1/2 cup milk
- 3 Tbsps butter

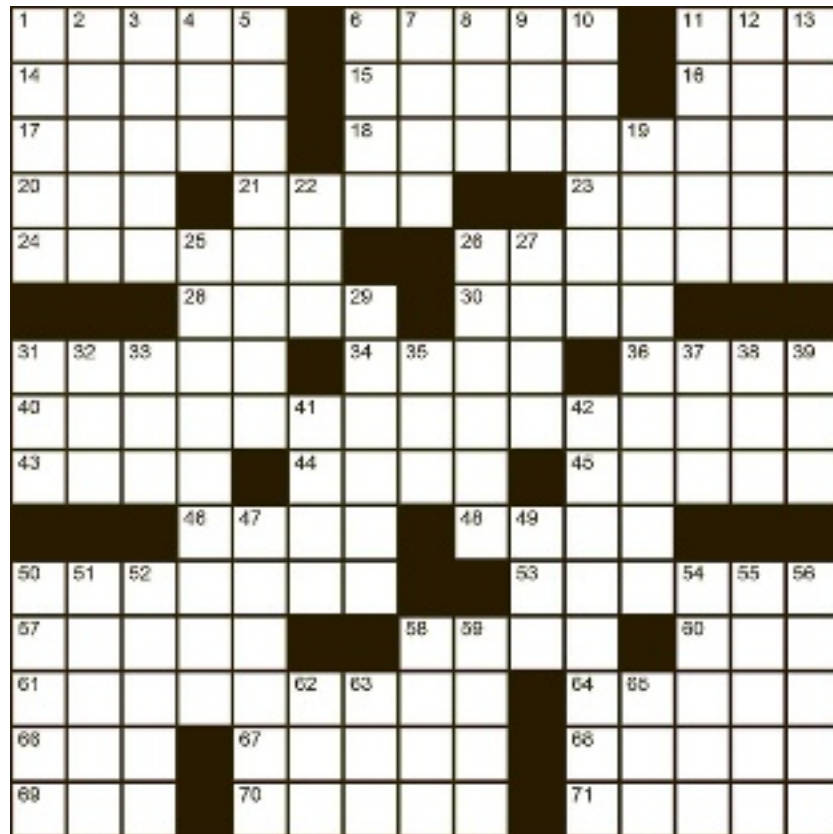
Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. In a large Dutch oven, cook beef over medium heat until browned, about 10 minutes.
3. Stir in garlic, celery, onions, carrots, pepper, chili powder, cumin, cinnamon, oregano and 1 tsp of salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes.
4. Stir in flour; cook for 1 minute. Add broth, water and Worcestershire sauce; simmer for 3 minutes. Divide mixture between two 8-inch baking dishes.
5. Meanwhile, in large pot of boiling salted water, cook sweet potato until tender, about 12 minutes. Drain and return pot to low heat. Stir in milk, butter and remaining salt; mash until smooth. Spread evenly over beef.
6. Bake until bubbly at the edges, about 35 minutes. Or cover with plastic wrap and then foil and freeze for up to 1 month. Bake, uncovered and frozen, in 350 F oven for 50 to 60 minutes.

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CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS

1. Fastened: 2 wds.
6. Morning times: acronym + abbr.
11. Ms. Monroe, mini-ly
14. _ _ -porter
15. Tamarack _ (NWT's official tree)
16. 'Brit' suffix
17. Classic fabric
18. Territory just outside Montreal where the Mohawk ironworkers who worked on #50-Across (as well as other buildings and bridges in North America for more than a century) are from
20. Veggie of Japan
21. Mr. Sachedina (Correspondent, CTV National News)
23. B-movie prop, _ ray gun
24. Melancholy in mood
26. Food storage items
28. 'Euclid' and 'Jacob' suffixes
30. Ms. Poehler's
31. Render revolverless
34. Seep slowly
36. Colosseum outfit
40. Dsquared2 is the fashion brand of these identical Canadian twin brothers: 4 wds.
43. Spectacles holders
44. Egypt-themed opera
45. Many times
46. Pirouette-maker's garb

48. Shingles site
50. _ Tower aka One World Trade Center (New York's tallest skyscraper)
53. Greatly grasp
57. Swift
58. Lingerie pieces
60. 1985 chart-topper: "We _ the World"

61. Travel plan
64. Happen
66. Jiffy
67. Rapsallion
68. Got along
69. ms. lang, et al.
70. Mary, Queen of _
71. Guitar bars

DOWN

1. Grade below C Minus: letter + wd.
2. 'Rainbow'-meaning prefix
3. Religion branch [abbr.]
4. Sport- _ (All-purpose vehicle)

5. Vista
6. _-Seltzer
7. Volcanic crater
8. Royal's title letters
9. Mil. force since 1910
10. "Only Love" feat. Pitbull & Gene Noble is a current song by what Grammy-winning

- reggae star?
11. Florida city
12. Billy Joel's "Don't _ _ Why"
13. Ostrich-like birds
19. Johanna _ , CBC News Now meteorologist
22. Gents
25. Dr. Stanley K. _ (Canadian weight loss physician)
26. Grand _ (Istanbul marketplace)
27. Preacher's closer
29. Dietary concern
31. 'Quiet' add-on
32. PBS funding org.
33. Swiss river, variantly
35. Unpaired
37. Slugger Mel
38. "Sheesh!"
39. The way Miss Shirley doesn't spell her name
41. 1949-created intl. alliance
42. Becomes less hot: 2 wds.
47. Farm milk dispensers
49. Goose, in Italy
50. Search, security-style
51. Ranked
52. The Odyssey, and others
54. Mother-of-pearl
55. Oil holder in the kitchen
56. Does a Border Collie's work
58. _ After Shave
59. Deli breads
62. Legendary bird
63. Past
65. Elevator _

* IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
If someone places an obstacle in your path your reaction will be to smash it to pieces. Such an extreme reaction could have unforeseen consequences, so find a compromise.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
If you let your suspicions get the best of you you might miss out on something fun. Not everyone is out to get you or grow rich at your expense. Don't be so defensive.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
It does not matter what feuds you've had in the past, it only matters now that you work together on something that you both believe in. You can do a lot of good if you join forces with like-minded people.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You can't force people to change their ways. You may try to persuade them, but they must be free to make their own mistakes. We learn most from the things we get wrong.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Cosmic activity in the communications area of your chart means you have plenty to say for yourself. Make sure that your words are positive and progressive because a lot of people will take what you say seriously.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You will have to make some unpopular decisions. Don't waste time worrying about what other people might think, just do what needs to be done.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Mars in your sign gives you the courage to take risks but they are more likely to pay off if you allow yourself to be guided by what your inner voice is trying to tell you.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If you do not feel comfortable then get up and leave. You must not put your own needs on hold just to make others feel good. On the contrary, your first duty is always to yourself.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You'll find it easy to get support today, let others know that what you do for yourself you'll also do for them. It may not be entirely true but if you succeed they will certainly get a share of the spoils.

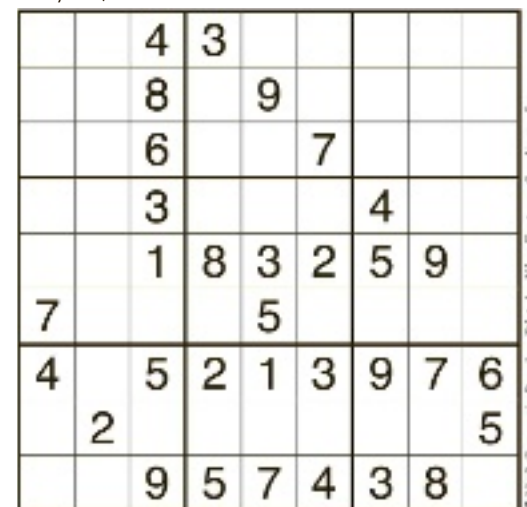
Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You've lost your direction lately but today your aim is crystal clear: you know exactly what you are doing and why you are doing it. Make sure you don't lose sight of your target again.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You need to bring problems and worries into the open where they can be discussed and dealt with. Don't go looking to blame others and you will find it easy to reach a compromise.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
A chapter in your life has been finished and it is time to move on. There may be one or two tears but that is natural and nothing to be ashamed of. What comes next will be much more enjoyable.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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